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Near East & South Asia

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Thursday
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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-144 *25 July 1996*

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 16 Jul

NC2307171196

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 16 July edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Egyptian-U.S. Differences Over Sanctions Against Sudan
2. Arrested 'Spy' Not a Spy After All
3. Labor Party Leader Praises Arab Unity, Solidarity
4. Labor Party Meets 11 July, Issues Statement
5. Writer Notes Positive Developments in Egypt's Foreign Policy
6. MB Leader Mashhur Urges Arabs, Muslims To Return to Their God
7. Writer Comments on Syrian Mediation Between Egypt, Iran
8. Writer Describes Netanyahu as 'Arrogant', 'Liar'

EGYPTIAN-U.S. DIFFERENCES OVER SANCTIONS AGAINST SUDAN

A 500-word report by Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah on pages 1 and 8 says that there are Egyptian-U.S. differences over the UN sanctions against Sudan. While Washington wants to intensify the sanctions to include military and economic measures, Egypt opposes this on the grounds that it would lead to the partitioning of Sudan and the secession of its south. Such a development would be viewed by Egypt as a threat to its national security, 'Arafah says.

ARRESTED 'SPY' NOT A SPY AFTER ALL

A 400-word report by Subhi Buhayri on pages 1 and 8 says that Makram Jirjis Bulus, a student at the Wireless Institute, has been acquitted of espionage charges and consequently set free. The whole episode was due to a misunderstanding. Bulus left a radio set and some tapes at the hotel where he works one day before he went on leave. The hotel's security official turned on the radio and was surprised to hear strange coded messages being broadcast. He informed the police, who arrested Bulus. However, the prosecutor ordered his release after it was proved that the radio set and the tapes are used in his studies at the institute. The newspaper welcomes Bulus' acquittal and asks him to consider the whole episode "a test from God" that he "passed" and to continue his "honorable struggle" in his work and studies.

LABOR PARTY LEADER PRAISES ARAB UNITY, SOLIDARITY

On pages 1 and 8, AL-SHA'B carries a 300-word article by Labor Party Leader Ibrahim Shukri in which he praises the recent Arab summit in Cairo because it witnessed "reconciliations" among various Arab leaders in the face of the "dangers" surrounding the Arab nation, especially in light of the "escalation of Israeli arrogance and hypocrisy" with the coming to power of Netanyahu. He calls for parallel moves by Arab parties, organizations, societies, and trade unions to strengthen Arab solidarity.

LABOR PARTY MEETS 11 JULY, ISSUES STATEMENT

According to an unattributed 500-word report on pages 1 and 8, the Labor Party Executive Committee met on 11 July to discuss world, Arab, and local developments. On the international level, the committee welcomed the formation of a new Turkish government under Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Islam-backed Welfare Party. It expressed hopes for a "rapid improvement" in Arab-Turkish relations in light of President Mubarak's visit to Turkey. On Egyptian- Iranian relations, the committee expressed "regret" that these relations have not improved despite Syria's mediation between the two countries. On the inter-Arab level, the committee welcomed the results of the recent Arab summit in Cairo. On the local level, the committee denounced the "criminal" attack on AL-SHA'B Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn. It urged the Egyptian authorities to apprehend the perpetrators and put them on trial. The committee asked the party leadership to "develop initiatives to halt the violence that is exhausting the country's resources at a time when it is in dire need of all efforts to face external challenges, which are increasing and threatening the vital interests of the Egyptian people and the Arab nation."

WRITER NOTES POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN EGYPT'S FOREIGN POLICY

On page 2, Chief Editor Majdi Ahmad Husayn writes a 3,000-word article in which he maintains that there have been "constant positive developments" in Egypt's foreign policy. The writer gives two examples of these "important" developments: the recent Arab Summit in Cairo and President Mubarak's visit to Turkey, which were both "successful." Husayn calls for Egypt's "reconciliation" with Iran and Sudan. He says such a reconciliation would represent a "coup" in the region, which would "redraw the map" of the region and "restore the balance of power" with Israel. He adds that

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Egypt and Syria must work to "bridge the military gap" with Israel.

Despite his high marks for Egypt's foreign policy, the writer has little praise for Egypt's domestic policy. He takes Dr. Usamah al- Baz, director of President Mubarak's Office for Political Affairs, to task for suggesting that political reform in Egypt must wait until the year 2005. He says we need democracy now and we cannot afford to wait until 2005. He adds that the current People's Assembly and Consultative Council are not fit to deal with the challenges facing the country. At the same time, "we cannot confront Zionist-U.S. arrogance" while [Muslim Brotherhood Leaders] Dr. Isam al-'Aryan, Dr. Muhammad Habib, and Abu-al-'Ula Madi, are in jail.

MB LEADER MASHHUR URGES ARABS, MUSLIMS TO RETURN TO THEIR GOD

AL-SHA'B carries on page 5 an 800-word article by Muslim Brotherhood leader Mustafa Mashhur entitled "O Arabs, O Muslims...Return to Your God." Mashhur urges the Arabs and Muslims not to be afraid of the "Zionist enemy" and its "nursemaid," the United States. He also urges them to return to God, who alone can help them defeat the "tyrannic" and "arrogant" powers.

Referring to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's visit to the United States and the "warm applause" he received from the members of the Congress, Mashhur says this is a good sign and not a bad one because it shows every Arab and Muslim that there can be no peace with this "arrogant" enemy. The U.S. "warm welcome and applause" for Netanyahu also reveals the extent of the U.S. "bias" in favor of the enemy. Mashhur says the Jews always "renege on their pledges," which they consider a means to a certain objective. Once they achieve their objective, there is no place for treaties and agreements. He adds that the Jews possess nuclear weapons and wish to deprive others of them. They put pressure on the United States to prevent any Arab or Islamic country from possessing these weapons.

Mashhur says the Arabs and Muslims must not despair. They must have confidence in God. The day will come when they will triumph and liberate Jerusalem. He says the recent Arab summit in Cairo was the "first serious" step in this direction, to the chagrin of Israel and the United States.

But more steps are needed to clear the Arab atmosphere and prepare the Arab people for confrontation. Egypt shares a heavy burden in this regard in view of its clout and status. Mashhur welcomes President Mubarak's visit to Turkey, which has begun to return to its Islamic roots after years of secular control. He says it is the duty of the Arab countries to "reconsider their stand toward the Zionist enemy and not to trust any agreement with it." The Arab states must also strengthen their relations with their own peoples, respect their rights and freedoms, relieve them of any injustice and oppression, and cleanse their societies of all manifestations of corruption.

Mashhur says Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat must take the feelings of the Palestinians into consideration. He must stop arresting Hamas members and release those in jail.

Mashhur says that because of its bias toward Israel, the United States has won the hostility of the Arab and Islamic peoples, "thus exposing its interests and security in these countries to danger." The United States must realize that its future lies with the Arab and Islamic countries and not with Israel. It must realize that Islam is "not hostile" to the United States and other countries. Islam is a religion of peace, freedom, and justice. It is Israel which is sowing discord between Islam and the European countries.

WRITER COMMENTS ON SYRIAN MEDIATION BETWEEN EGYPT, IRAN

In a 300-word column on page 6 entitled "Relations With Iran and the Fifth Column," Ahmad al-Suyufi regrets the failure of Syrian mediation to improve ties between Egypt and Iran. He blames this on Israeli and U.S. pressure. He claims that the United States has sent "threatening letters" to Egypt and blames the failure of the Syrian mediation on some Egyptian officials who defend "U.S. and Zionist interests." He says that in the face of the "U.S.-Zionist" alliance, the Arabs must use all their cards, including promoting relations with Iran and Turkey. He adds that in this world there are no idealists who believe in solutions on moral grounds. The logic of force, balances of power, and interests govern relations among countries. Israel has agreed to negotiate with Hizballah out of fear of the Katyushas while it has snubbed governments and refused to negotiate with them.

WRITER DESCRIBES NENTANYAHU AS 'ARROGANT,' 'LIAR'

A 1,500-word article by Dr. Mahjub 'Umar describes Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu as "arrogant," a "liar," and an "unwelcomed visitor" to Egypt. After describing Netanyahu's speech before the U.S. as "provocative" and after elaborating on his policies and stances, the writer says that Netanyahu must be given the cold-shoulder in Cairo and he must be given the

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message that the peace between Israel and Egypt is a "cold peace."

Political Islam Review: AL-NUR 17 Jul

NC2407194996

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 17 July edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-NUR that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Editorial Opposes Butrus-Ghali's Reappointment as UN Chief
2. Ulema Say Jihad Is Duty for Every Muslim
3. Islamic Research Group Member Views Lions, Rotary Clubs
4. Muslim Scholar Interviewed on Terrorism, Israel
5. Academics Call for Sex Separation in Schools

EDITORIAL OPPOSES BUTRUS-GHALI'S REAPPOINTMENT AS UN CHIEF

The chairman of AL-NUR's board of directors, al-Hamzah Di'bis, publishes an approximately 1,400-word editorial on the front page on the controversy over Butrus Butrus-Ghali's seeking a second term as UN secretary general. He faults Butrus-Ghali's policy in Bosnia- Herzegovina, claims that the United States' opposition to his reelection is specious, and supports the nomination of the Organization of the Islamic Conference secretary general Dr. al- Ghabid for that post.

He says: "The entire Islamic world was angered late last year when the United Nations decided to send UN forces there to prevent the Serbs, led by war criminal Karadzic, from annihilating the Muslims in Bosnia—a move that would have saved the Muslims there— but Dr. Butrus-Ghali did not implement that decision on the grounds that he feared for the UN troops."

Di'bis remarks that the reason for the anger was that Butrus- Ghali "was more royal than the king" and put himself in charge of the UN security forces. He adds: "The one in charge of these forces is the United Nations itself, which decided to face up to war criminal Karadzic. Butrus-Ghali's motive was not, as he announced, his fear for these forces; he was prompted by other considerations that could be linked to faith." The writer continues: "We should not be surprised when we see the Bosnian Government now strongly opposing Dr. Butrus-Ghali's renomination for a second term."

He adds that Srebrenica enjoyed the UN forces' protection but when Dr. Butrus-Ghali "ordered it be abandoned," the Serbs managed to capture it. He notes that Butrus-Ghali was the "staunchest advocate" of not arming the Bosnian Muslims. "For this reason, all the Islamic nations reject Dr. Butrus-Ghali's reelection to the post of UN secretary general," Di'bis says.

He adds: "Some observers say Dr. Butrus-Ghali's publication of a military report on the Qana incident was not in support of justice as much as a move to win the support of the Maronites in Lebanon with Israel's blessing." He says Butrus-Ghali "was the first to call for peace with Israel" in an interview with the French newspaper LE MONDE in the early 1970's under the auspices of world Masonry. He adds: "Therefore we are not surprised to see France leading the European Masonry organizations in the face of the United States' specious rejection of Dr. Butrus-Ghali. We say it is specious because it does not express the United States' actual stand. The United States has firm control over the issue but allows international support to be voiced for him."

He adds: "What confirms this is that the United States has a weapon in this battle which it will not use against Dr. Butrus- Ghali—the veto. Nonuse of the veto will reveal the truth of this rejection; that is to say, that it is no more than specious opposition."

He notes that Niger's president has proposed nominating Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid, secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, as UN secretary general.

ULEMA SAY JIHAD IS DUTY FOR EVERY MUSLIM

A 340-word, front page report, filed by Ahmad al-Nahhas, says: "Muslim ulema have emphasized that jihad is an individual duty of every Muslim if an enemy usurps Islamic land. They also called on Muslim rulers to work to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, and Palestine from the grip of the Zionists." The report cites various Muslim academics on the importance of jihad.

ISLAMIC RESEARCH GROUP MEMBER VIEWS LIONS, ROTARY CLUBS

A 170-word, unattributed front page report says that Dr. Ahmad Kamal Abu-al-Majd, a former Egyptian minister of information and member of the Islamic Research Group, "has called for the disclosure of the sources of financing of the suspicious Lions and Rotary clubs."

The report adds: "In a statement to AL-NUR, he asserts that these clubs represent an international organization with malicious Zionist goals. They should be dealt with very cautiously." The report says he "strongly denounced" al-Azhar Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi's acceptance of an invitation from the ladies

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auxiliaries of these clubs "on the pretext that the aim was to clarify the true Islam."

The report also says that Dr. Yahya Isma'il, secretary of the al- Azhar ulema front, has noted that the front, which "comprises more than 1,500 members," is eager to "maintain the existing good relationship between the front and al-Azhar shaykhdom." The front's secretary called for "great caution in dealing with suspicious clubs, such as the Rotary and the Lions, especially by the holy al- Azhar", the report adds.

MUSLIM SCHOLAR INTERVIEWED ON TERRORISM, ISRAEL

On page 3 is carried a 1,450-word interview with prominent Muslim scholar and thinker Dr. Mustafa Mahmud by Khalid al-Shirbini. Answering correspondent's questions, the interviewee discusses a wide range of topics, including Arab-Israeli talks, the fall of communism, terrorism, secularism, and the use of the veil.

Asked the "real reasons" for terrorism, Mahmud says: "There are many reasons—primarily unemployment, the high cost of living, the poverty from which we are suffering, and a declining economic situation." He remarks that all these "cause anger and sadness in the citizen in general and the youths in particular."

Asked who instigates terrorism, he says: "The primary motivators are countries that wish instability for Egypt. These terrorists are hired criminals trained in Afghanistan. Egypt is still a pioneering and great country respected by all countries." He adds: "Also we must not forget that Israel is the top agent of terrorism in the region. It seeks to dominate those around it by every means, even if this leads to destabilizing neighboring countries. It wants to impose its hegemony on the region with legitimate or illegitimate means."

Asked the way out of "the crisis", Mahmud says: "The only solution is for all Arabs and Muslims to stand in the same rank through actions not words. All Arab and Islamic countries are required to unite to pinpoint the source of terrorism and reach all those who finance the terrorists." He notes that a cure for this "phenomenon" can only be effected by eradicating unemployment, improving the "social atmosphere," eliminating corruption, and education in schools and universities. He says radio and television can be used in this effort.

Mahmud says the head scarf is required for women because it "has been decreed by the heavens" and is a "genuine" Egyptian tradition. However, he says he does not "recognize" the complete veiling of a woman, noting that this has nothing to do with Islam because that type of dress "existed before Islam."

Asked if he believes in a dialogue with the terrorists, Mahmud says: "There should be no dialogue with terrorists. They are criminals, debauched people, and murderers who use arms for intellectual and religious terrorism." He asks: "How can we talk with people who take money to tarnish the image of Islam and betray their country?"

ACADEMICS CALL FOR SEX SEPARATION IN SCHOOLS

A 900-word, unattributed report on page 3 discusses the Kuwaiti parliament's ratification of a law separating male and female students at the University of Kuwait and other higher education institutions.

Various Muslim academics debate the issue of sex separation in school in light of the Kuwaiti parliament's measure. A former president of the al-Azhar University says: "God bless the Kuwaiti National Assembly for passing this law banning the mixing of the sexes in schools and universities." The report says he "called on all officials in Egypt and all countries of the Arab and Islamic world to follow this example."

Dr. Sabri 'Abd-al-Ra'uf, a professor at al-Azhar University's shari'ah college, says this was a wise decision "to keep evil away" so that every one can live in peace. He also calls on officials to provide separate places for female and male students.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Mahdi 'Abd-al-Qadir, a professor at a religious college, says men and women mixing in public places, such as on public transport, in schools, universities, and clubs is "something deplored by every dignified and sane person."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, France's De Charette Hold News Conference in Gaza

JN2407151596 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1220 GMT 24 Jul 96

[News conference by Palestinian Authority President Yasir 'Arafat and French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette in Gaza on 23 July— recorded, with De Charette speaking in French with passage-by-passage translation into Arabic]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Arafat] I warmly welcome French Foreign Minister de Charette, and I thank him for France's efforts and role in advancing and salvaging the peace process, especially in light of the current difficult circumstances facing us. On this occasion, I would like to recall what His Excellency President Chirac told

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me. He said: Whenever you encounter a difficulty, you only have to call Dr. Chirac [as heard]. Please give His Excellency President Chirac our great thanks for all that he, France, and the French Government are doing. Now more than ever, we need France to fulfill its important and basic role in salvaging the peace process. This is in the interests of not only the Palestinians, but also the Israelis, the region, and the world at large. I would also like to recall the recent statement issued by the EU, and France's role in bringing about this statement. Likewise, I would like to recall the statement issued by the G-7, in which Russia was involved. The prominent role played by President Chirac contributed to the adoption of that strong statement by that meeting held in Lyons, France. All these statements emphasize the importance of continuing and advancing the peace process. Once again, we would like to thank France—president, government, and people—for everything it has done and is doing for the Palestinian people. At the same time, I would like to thank your excellency for this visit and for the efforts you are making. I thank you for the great frankness that permeated today's meeting. We deem this meeting useful, important, and crucially significant at this point in time. Difficult circumstances are facing the Palestinian people and the peace process. We need your help to salvage the peace process and to assist our Palestinian people. Again, you are welcome, and I thank you very much for your support for the Palestinian people.

[De Charette] Thank you for these words, which touched me very deeply. For many long years, the Palestinian people have experienced many difficulties. Yet they have seriously worked to vindicate their future. They have made great sacrifices. France is well aware of these sacrifices and respects them. It accords great attention to the [words indistinct] harbored by the Palestinian people.

Mr. President: What you have done and continue to do courageously and patriotically has France's full support. I came today to communicate to you the greetings of [words indistinct] France and to express to you its commitment to advance your endeavors. Circumstances might change, however, France's options will remain unchanged. Peace is the only way. Therefore, all that has been signed, including the provisions regarding Hebron, must be honored. We must return to the negotiations that began on 4 May. The final-status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians must continue. Given all of this, the special status of Jerusalem, which will be discussed in these negotiations, must be respected.

The Palestinian people should be able to exercise their right to self—determination, just like all people in the world, and for the same reasons other peoples are exercising this right. Peace and security are compatible. Security is a corollary of peace, and vice versa. What is appropriate for some people should be considered legitimate for others. I have come to say this to you. This is what I will [words indistinct] during this tour of the region, of which we are well aware, which we love, and in which we have many friends, only friends. We have addressed all issues, including Orient House. Just as I have said at other legs of this tour, there are no changes in the French stand on this issue [words indistinct]. Today I received the speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council and the higher education minister at the French General Consulate in Jerusalem [words indistinct]. I would like to emphasize that France will extend special assistance to educational, social, and cultural organizations in East Jerusalem. This leg of my tour was very important to me and to France. We will all work to reactivate the peace process. This is the aim of my tour. Nonetheless, this will not be at the expense of my convictions. On the contrary, based on our convictions, France and all of our European partners will shoulder their responsibilities fully in this region [words indistinct]. I have come to say to you, Mr. President, at this difficult time that you can count on our country. [Two-minute passage includes remarks in French by De Charette, a question by an unidentified correspondent, and De Charette's answer, for which there is no translation into Arabic]

['Arafat] We welcome this French role and consider it important to the region as a whole and to the peace process.

[De Charette] [Words indistinct] Indeed, the EU has specified ways of treating visits to Palestinian institutions in east Jerusalem, especially Orient House. For this visit, I was satisfied with implementing to the letter what was agreed on with the various European partners in this regard. Mr. Faysal al-Husayni was not in Jerusalem today, and my aides visited Orient House. Later I received Palestinian figures, including parliamentarians, at the French consulate in Jerusalem. Therefore, we have not changed our treatment of, or the way we deal with, Orient House, at least as far as I personally am concerned.

[Unidentified correspondent, in English] My first question is addressed to President 'Arafat. It was reported after your meeting with David Levi that the Palestinian side made a commitment not to practice any diplomatic activities in the Orient House.

['Arafat, in English] Who told you so?

[Correspondent, in English] It was reported in the...

['Arafat, interrupting in English] Who told you so?

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[Correspondent, in English] It was on the Israeli radio.

['Arafat, in English] Israeli radio. I am not in a position to reply to this rumor.

[Correspondent, in English] My second question is addressed to Monsieur de Charette. It is about the change in your [words indistinct] I think it was planned to visit Orient House. They changed [word indistinct] and you didn't visit Orient House. It is because of the Israeli pressure?

[De Charette, in English] No, that is not true, sir. There isn't any kind of change in the French position toward Orient house. Not at all.

['Arafat] The most important thing about this meeting is that it was the first with the new [Israeli] government. Therefore, I was... [pauses] My meeting with the Israeli foreign minister was positive. It does not matter what the (?results) will be. We talked about all issues, and we hope that what we agreed on will be implemented.

Here, I welcome Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who has honored us by spending tonight in Gaza. ['Arafat and de Charette are seen behind two podiums addressing reporters, with Palestinian and French officials and security guards behind them]

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th on 'Arafat's Meeting With De Charette, Israel's Levi

JN2407174896 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian and Arab political quarters are looking favorably at the activity under way in the region intended to reactivate the Arab-Israeli peace process. One of the most important events in this respect is yesterday's meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi, as well as the French foreign minister's tour of a number of states in the region.

Our station telephoned Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian minister of planning and international cooperation, to get his opinion about the 'Arafat-Levi meeting and the Palestinian president's meeting with French foreign minister at dawn today. Dr. Sha'th said:

[Begin Sha'th recording] This important meeting between President 'Arafat and the Palestinian delegation with David Levi, the new Israeli foreign minister, is the first meeting to be held at this level. It is preparation for the upcoming meeting between President 'Arafat and new Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The importance of this meeting is [first] that it actually materialized and that the Israeli delegation demonstrated a positive attitude in forming the negotiating committees in order to begin implementing what was agreed upon with the former Israeli Government; and second, to resolve the problems that have resulted from suspending the peace process for so long. This includes starting an immediate withdrawal from Hebron, in addition to the other tasks that have been postponed, and then moving ahead to the final settlement negotiations.

Of course, it is not enough to exhibit a positive spirit in making statements. However, it is a beginning, and judgment must be reserved until we see the results materialize on the ground. In other words, we expect to see a quick withdrawal from Hebron, the opening of the safe passageway between Gaza and the West Bank, the release of prisoners—although we were promised this will start with our sister female prisoners, but nothing has happened so far—and the easing of the closure, which stifled the Palestinian economy. We are watching, and we hope to see all of these matters accomplished. We are also watching some of the negative things that are happening, such as what we heard and what was repeated over and over by the new Israeli officials about their intentions regarding the settlements and Jerusalem.

The next few days will prove if there is truly a new approach by the Israeli Government, or if this is only an attempt to improve the picture of the new Israeli Cabinet, particularly after Mr. Netanyahu's visit to Cairo, in which he also tried to make new impressions. At any rate, the Palestinian side is waiting, and we are particularly eager to see the peace process restored once more in order to accomplish what it failed to accomplish so far.

I attended an important meeting last night, which lasted until 0200 [2300 GMT], between President 'Arafat and a Palestinian delegation, and French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, head of French diplomacy. The French side is trying to create new facts on the ground through a large-scale European role, spearheaded by the French.

De Charette underscored the French position on all matters yesterday, particularly on Jerusalem and its special status, eastern Jerusalem, settlement activities, the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, the need to adhere to the negotiations process and implement what was accomplished starting with Hebron. He also talked about French and European support for the peace process. France is now confronting the Israeli position not only in the Palestinian arena, but also in the Lebanese and Syrian arenas.

I believe the French minister's visit to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel today all fall under the category of reactivating a genuine return to the peace process and its bases. [end recording]

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Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Sees 'No Change' in Israeli Stands Following Levi Talks

MM2507105496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Salih Qallab: "Sha'th: Meeting Between Palestinian President and Levi Song With Beautiful Music But No Words"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Occupied Jerusalem — Dr. Nabil Sha'th, international relations minister in the Palestinian National Authority, has described Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi the day before yesterday as a song with beautiful music but no words. He said: We heard very smooth words, but with regard to the main issues, we have sensed no change in the Israeli stands since the formation of the new government.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Dr. Nabil Sha'th said that Levi was friendly and expressed during the meeting the desire to reinforce trust between the Israeli Government and the National Authority, but he gave no clear answer to the difficult questions put by the Palestinian side headed by 'Arafat. These questions concerned withdrawal from Hebron, the safe corridor, redeployment in area "B" in the West Bank, and fixing a date for the initiation of the final phase negotiations.

The international relations minister in the Palestinian National Authority went on to say: In essence, matters between us and the Israelis are still as they stand, and all we heard from Levi was merely promises to study outstanding matters and find solutions to them soon.

Regarding the possibility of a meeting between the Palestinian president and Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, Nabil Sha'th said: We did not raise this question with David Levi. However, the general atmosphere that dominated the meeting the day before yesterday makes that a possibility, but without a date. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi Comments on 'Arafat's 25 Jul Damascus Visit

JN2507065396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat will leave the homeland for Syria today for talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

President 'Arafat is accompanied by a ministerial delegation that includes Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashahibi, Education Minister Yasir 'Amr, Higher Education Minister Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, and presidential adviser Nabil Abu-Rudaynah.

PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi said this visit is being made in the wake of recent developments in the region and out of eagerness to entrench Arab cooperation and solidarity, particularly among the parties that are directly involved and are partners in the peace process.

In an interview with the Haifa-based AL-HIWAR paper, Qaddumi said that dialogue between 'Arafat and al-Asad will focus on exchanging views about the future and ways to enhance the peace march based on the principles of the Madrid conference.

President Yasir 'Arafat met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on the sidelines of the expanded Cairo Arab summit.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Official on 'Arafat's Damascus Visit, Talks With Levi

NC2507124496 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0515 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Telephone interview with Furayh Abu-Middayn, a member of the Palestinian Authority and justice minister, in Gaza, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd, in Cairo; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Abu-al-Majd] What is the importance of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Damascus and what are the topics on the agenda between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and 'Arafat?

[Abu-Middayn] The meeting falls within the framework of the Egyptian invitation to the Arab summit under the slogan coined by President Mubarak—closing the Arab rank. After the Gulf war and after the Arabs lost their funds and weapons, all that was left to them was their will, cohesion, and closing of ranks to confront the grave and critical stage and the political reversal in Israel against the peace process. The Israelis view the Arab world as fragmented parts. President 'Arafat's visit to Syria aims to enhance efforts to unify the Arab stand and close ranks in the face of the Israeli Government. Thus far we have not felt there is a real peace process. If you follow developments you notice that the talks yesterday and the day before focused on implementing the transitional stages resulting from the Taba agreement. We must promote inter-Arab efforts so that we are in a better negotiating position. This requires a cohesive Palestinian-Syrian-Egyptian stand with the cordon states of Lebanon and Jordan. I believe this visit comes at the proper time, particularly since Israel is turning its back on the peace process and talking of [Palestinian] violations and such nonsense. The final stage issues require great efforts. The Arab nation realizes that the Jerusalem issue is an Arab and

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Islamic issue before being a Palestinian issue. There are also the issues of refugees and borders, which concern the countries surrounding Israel. There are also the issues of water and the Palestinian state. These issues require Arab efforts, particularly because we have not yet put these issues forward to the final-stage negotiations. We are trying to continue negotiations on the transitional stage, which Israel (?suspended). The former Israeli Government's position was much worse than we expected regarding safe passage, the POW's and the detainees, and the economic siege. All these issues are on hold and the main question on the Syrian-Palestinian agenda, like the Egyptian-Palestinian agenda, is how to confront things after the extremists, generals, and rabbis reached power in Israel.

[Abu-Al-Majd] Is there anything new after the meeting between 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi regarding the principal issues on the Israeli-Palestinian track?

[Abu-Middayn] There is nothing new. The meeting referred the issues to the higher committee on negotiations, which used to meet continually. There is a tactical turnabout in the Israeli stance, but it is not productive. The meeting opened the way for dialogue and negotiations but has not resulted in objective facts. We are awaiting the meeting of this committee. The meeting between 'Arafat and Levi was a recognition that the PLO and President 'Arafat are the real symbols of the Palestinian people. Perhaps this meeting shows acknowledgement that the Palestinian people exist and that there are such things as a Palestinian issue, a Palestinian president, and the PLO, which the Israelis used to describe as terrorist. The Likud, which used to give such terms to the PLO and 'Arafat, is now being forced to commit itself to dealing with our existence; this is perhaps where the importance of the meeting lies. We have not felt any progress in the peace process, because we have not succeeded in resolving numerous issues between the Palestinians and Israelis. We hope for the best, we are there in the West Bank and Gaza, the clock will not go back, and we will not begin from square one, as some people issue a call for a return to the Madrid conference, security for security, and peace for peace, with no mention of the land. Israel began to realize that the viable principle is land for peace and that no other proposal will succeed. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Briefs Arab, Foreign Envoys on Peace Process

JN2407171296 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received Arab ambassadors to the National Authority [NA] today. He briefed them on developments in the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track in light of the policy of the new Israeli Government, led by Binyamin Netanyahu. President 'Arafat also briefed them on the results of political contacts and efforts the NA made to pursue the peace process and implement the agreements signed between the NA and Israel.

President 'Arafat received the Russian ambassador today. The two discussed the latest developments in the peace process and the role Russia can play to continue the peace process in the region. The president also received the PRC ambassador today. They discussed the latest developments in the peace process, ways to make it continue, and the importance of implementing the agreements signed between the NA and Israel. They also discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations.

Palestinian Affairs: PA Officials To Open 6 East Jerusalem Offices in 'Few Days'

TA2507044496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Six members of the Palestinian Authority [PA] Council will open offices in East Jerusalem in a few days, said council member Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir. Interviewed by our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem, he said that if Israel closes these offices, this will constitute a violation of the agreement.

'Abd-al-Qadir denied reports that Yasir 'Arafat, in his meeting with Foreign Minister Levi, promised to stop Palestinian political activity in East Jerusalem. He said there are PLO institutions in East Jerusalem, and they will continue to work normally.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Rujub — Silmi Arrest Proves Need To Continue Process

TA2507103496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0905 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian security services in Gaza have detained one of the heads of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] military wing who escaped from a Palestinian jail and was found in the possession of large quantities of weapons. Colonel Jibril

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al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian Preventive Security [PPS], says that his people control the autonomous areas in the West Bank and continue to prevent terrorist acts. Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Begin recording] [Ben-Menahem] Terrorist 'Awwad Silmi, one of the heads of Hamas' military wing, who murdered the late Colonel Me'ir Mintz and perpetrated other attacks, escaped from a Palestinian jail under odd circumstances two weeks ago. This morning, the Palestinian security services in Gaza announced that they had captured him while he was hiding in a Gaza house together with additional Hamas activists. A large cache of arms was also discovered in the house.

The Palestinian Authority [PA] is now trying to emphasize that it is fighting terror in order to prove to the new Israeli Government that the continued implementation of the Oslo accords is necessary. Israeli security elements praise the activity of the Palestinian security services in the West Bank, saying that they are more serious than their Gaza counterparts in their fight against Hamas and Islamic Jihad terror. Following are remarks by Jibril al-Rujub, head of the PPS.

[Al-Rujub] You cannot speak of peace and security and continue with settlements. You cannot speak of peace and security when there is no safe passage. You cannot speak of security when the Israeli Government has so far refused to fulfill its commitment regarding Hebron. Look, there are difficulties too....

[Ben-Menahem, interrupting] Will there be terrorist attacks as a result?

[Al-Rujub] No, no. For our part, we have adopted and will adopt measures against all those — be they Palestinians or others —who try to use violence to interrupt the process. As far as we are concerned, this is a question of principle. Still, the Israeli Government's refusal to fulfill its part of the agreement will not help the PA to adopt measures in this direction.

[Ben-Menahem] Jibril al-Rujub has called on the Israeli Government not to renew settlement because of the fear that this will hurt the peace process. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Police Release Islamic Jihad's al-Hindi From Prison

TA2407102696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian security services have released Muhammad al-Hindi, a leader of the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip who was arrested after the latest wave of terror attacks in Israel, from prison. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that al-Hindi was placed under house arrest and that the Palestinian Police cited his poor health as the reason for his release.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Premature' To See 'Arafat-Levi Meeting as Peace Relaunch

MM2407140396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 9

[Editorial: "A Mere Start; Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat Received Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi Yesterday — the First Meeting Between the Palestinian Leadership and a Member of the New Israeli Government"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and David Levi in Bayt Hanun village (north of the Gaza Strip) yesterday is a development which deserves to be discussed outside the frameworks of the known and studied policy, at least for the time being. It is almost certain that the two sides will play down the importance of the meeting as regards the possibility of achieving tangible progress. There are numerous public contradictions which cannot be eliminated by a protocol meeting between the Israeli and Palestinian sides.

On the Israeli side, there is much talk and little action, if not none, as regards peace and the atmosphere that should be secured and reinforced. The results of Binyamin Netanyahu's visit to Washington and his official and demagogic statements there represent negative factors which encourage no wise person to expect a just and real peace.

The crisis is with the current Israeli Government, which is required to take part in the regional peace plan and which — by virtue of its makeup — torpedoes the prospects for peace. It reached power through an election program which drains peace of its substance. It includes hard-liners whose extremism annoys half the Israelis, even. Incidentally, David Levi himself insisted on the inclusion of Ari'el Sharon, the "butcher of Lebanon," in the government, otherwise he would have resigned and torpedoed the government from within. And if some people are trying to reassure the Arabs by saying that the stern Israeli language is designed for local consumption, what is their reply to the Israeli saying that Israeli governments respect their voters' intelligence and comply with their wishes more than many Arab governments do?

On the Palestinian side, there is a state of fear resulting from the Likud's regaining power in Tel Aviv. People who are in a state of fear tend to negotiate from a weak position and lose the initiative. Any Palestinian initiative

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proceeding from the logic of appeasement or begging is doomed to failure. And if some Palestinian leaders think the internal opposition has lost its credibility because of the suspension of its operations in the Likud era and that it is therefore possible now to present new interpretations of the clauses of the "Declaration Of Principles" agreement, that is not the case. The general picture is not all "black and white," and the Palestinian scene — despite the emotional reactions, contradictions, zealous and desperate tendencies, and the tendencies advocating normalization — knows full well what it wants and what it does not want.

On that basis, perhaps it was useful to hold a meeting such as the 'Arafat-Levi meeting in Bayt Hanun in order to break the fear barriers and open channels of contact, of a kind. However, it is premature to consider this meeting a prelude to a relaunch of the peace process as though nothing had happened in Tel Aviv. The Palestinian leadership knows better than anyone else what the Likud has in store for it, since the Likud — through some of its ministers — still considers it "a bunch of war criminals and terrorists."

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israeli Secret Service Agent Confesses to Murdering Arabs

MS2407105196 London THE GUARDIAN in English 24 Jul 96 p 10

[Report by Derek Brown: "Shin Bet Man 'Proud of Murdering Two Arabs'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem — An Israeli secret service agent who murdered two Arab prisoners has broken 12 years of silence to admit the killings and say he is proud of what he did.

On the eve of his retirement, Ehud Yatom has blown the cover on one of the hottest controversies in the long, tangled, and unsavoury history of Shin Bet, Israel's internal secret police.

In April 1984, as head of the operations branch, Mr Yatom was ordered into action when four Arab youths hijacked a bus on the coastal road from Tel Aviv to Ashkelon.

In an attempt to secure a mass release of Palestinian prisoners, they forced the driver to take them to Dir al-Balah, in the heart of the Gaza Strip.

After hours of negotiation, special forces stormed the bus and killed two of the hijackers. One passenger, a woman soldier, died of her wounds.

The two surviving hijackers, Subhi and Majdi Abu Jum'a, were badly beaten, and were photographed by four press men as they were led away.

Avraham Shalom the then head of Shin Bet officially known as the General Security Service (GSS), was at the scene. So was Mr Yatom.

In an interview with the newspaper YEDIOT AHRONOTH, Mr Yatom takes up the story: "Everybody who was at the site took care of the terrorists: the army, civilians, the GSS. They [the hijackers] were attacked. This was a spontaneous action which came after a long tense night, when there was uncertainty about what was happening on the bus.

"The terrorists were attacked by everybody who was there. We put them [the survivors] in the Transit and set off. En route, I received an order from Avraham Shalom to kill them, and so I killed them."

The army said that the two teenagers had died of their wounds on their way to an Ashkelon hospital. Even with strict military censorship, that version could not and did not last.

The then defence minister, Moshe Arens, was obliged to order an internal inquiry. It eventually resulted in the resignation of Mr Shalom, but not before the Shin Bet men diverted blame to the senior military man on the scene, Brigadier Yitzak Mordechai.

In the interview, to be published on Friday, Mr Yatom details the cover-up.

"We reached the decision, myself and Avraham Shalom, that if one hair fell from the head of Yitzhak Mordechai, we would admit that we did the killing. But Mordechai was not accused of the killing; he was accused of behaviour that does not befit an officer."

Brig Mordechai was in fact charged and tried for assault. He was acquitted after a seven-minute hearing in August 1985 and soon after was promoted to major-general. He left the army only last year. He is now minister of defence.

After the inquiry there were calls for the Shin Bet killers to be prosecuted. The attorney-general made an official complaint to the police.

But in the end, Presided Chaim Herzog decided, after consulting the government, to pardon all the officers implicated in the affair.

They included Mr Yatom, who retires this week after 24 years' service with a clean record, the prospect of a career in business, and a clear conscience.

"I am one of the few who came away from the affair with a healthy soul," he told Yediot Ahronoth. "I am proud of what I have done."

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Mr Yatom does, however, have one regret about the execution: the bad publicity it attracted. "We erred when we killed them, since the operation was exposed to the media," he said.

"I can testify that I acted against terrorists under four prime ministers, and in my opinion this was the right way to act. Only clean, moral hands in Shin Bet can do what is needed in a democratic state."

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Algeria

Algeria: 5 Injured in Algiers Bomb Attack Against Police

LD2407143596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A homemade bomb, containing a small explosive charge, went off this morning at about 0900 in the district of Beau Fraisier, in the municipality of Bouzareah [Greater Algiers]. The bomb exploded when a police patrol, which was giving chase to a stolen car, drove by. Five people were injured in the blast, four of them policemen.

Algeria: Transport Minister Denies Airline To Be Privatized

LD2407213496 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Algerian Airline [Air Algerie] is experiencing financial difficulties, which a senior official at the company estimated at 2.5 billion dinars. The company has over 9,000 workers and is experiencing problems. This situation has been treated with some exaggeration by the media, which said that Algerian Airlines is preparing for privatization. However, a public authority in the person of Transport Minister Said Bendakir has explained the issue. Rabih Medaoui has this report:

[Medaoui] In the corridors of Algerian Airlines there is talk about meetings, or probably, an easing of tension between the union of pilots and the general directorate of the company. [passage omitted]

The company is financing another situation now. This time it is the union of maintenance technicians, which might resort to a strike as of 29 July if the agreement reached with the former public directorate is not implemented. [passage omitted]

A lot of words have been written about the pilots' strike and the threats of technicians to the extent that some have interpreted them as preparation for the company's privatization. This has warranted the following clarification from the Ministry of Transport:

[Begin Bendakir recording] A number of brothers are talking, spreading doubts by saying that there is an intention to privatize [Algerian Airlines]. We say that in the government program, which was endorsed by the Transitional National Council, the Ministry of Transport program and in the government program in general this issue is absolutely not included. [end recording]

[Medaoui] The important thing that a six-week strike has left everyone wondering about is: Is what is happening at the airlines only a matter of wages? We will know the answer at a later date.

Egypt

Egypt: French Foreign Minister 'Cautiously Optimistic' About Peace

NC2407204896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Alexandria, 24 Jul (MENA)—French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette has said that he met with President Husni Mubarak today and reviewed with him the results of his tour of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel.

At a news conference tonight, de Charette said: I can say that the threads of peace are being joined again, although gradually and perhaps too slowly.

He affirmed that there are very encouraging signs but at the same time the road to peace will be long and hard.

The French foreign minister announced: When I left Paris at the beginning of this tour, I had two goals: first to listen to all the parties of the peace process and secondly to explore their views and comments on this affair, particularly as there is general anxiety about the peace process. My plan was to try to rejoin the threads of peace.

He added: I can draw the following important conclusion as a result of my tour. It is clear that all the countries participating in the peace process such as Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine are eager to resume the negotiations and wish to safeguard the peace.

De Charette said that these countries have declared their support for the peace process.

He affirmed his country's backing for the peace process and its wish to give it fresh impetus on the basis of the principles already agreed upon, including the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the land-for-peace formula, and self-determination for the Palestinians.

The French foreign minister said that he had found very positive signs on the Israeli side. He referred to the Israeli prime minister's recent visit to Cairo and the meeting between Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

De Charette remarked: All these are steps in the right direction.

He added: We need further steps. I have sensed a change of attitude in Israel. It is gradual but it is a change in the direction of peace.

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The French foreign minister said that his country will always be ready to play an active role with all the parties concerned in the peace process with the aim of making this process succeed.

He added that the region's countries are waiting for the United States to play a basic role to boost the peace and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

De Charette added that he sensed during his tour of the region that the concerned parties insist on a French and also an EU role in the Middle East, affirming that the Europeans will work in this direction.

He summarized the outcome of his tour of the region by saying: When I left Paris I was worried but now I can say that I am cautiously optimistic.

Regarding the role that France can play alongside the U.S. role in the peace process, he said: We will be active partners in the peace process and will do what we need to do to boost it.

Asked if France has submitted a proposal to bring the Arab and Israeli views closer on the Jerusalem issue, he replied: If miracles were possible, many people would be working miracles.

On whether he thinks that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu might in the future come to accept the land-for-peace principle, de Charette remarked: I think it is premature to speak of this now, but I believe that a change has occurred in the Israeli stand. We must encourage this change with determination and also with accuracy and adherence to our positions.

The French minister said he believes that full respect for the principles on which the peace process is based can ensure its success.

Egypt: Egyptians Said Angry at Netanyahu's 'Provocative Policy'

NC2507084296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0505 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jul (MENA)—AL-AHRAM newspaper underlines that the Egyptian public will not change their angry feelings for Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu as long as he does not change his provocative policy. In its editorial today, AL-AHRAM says that the reason for this anger is Netanyahu's statements since his election campaign and his speech before the U.S. Congress, in which he launched a violent attack on the Arabs, claiming that they have no democracy and that they must submit to the status quo that Israel imposed by its occupation of Arab territories. The paper says that even though Netanyahu tried to dilute his dry and provocative statements during his recent visit to Cairo, he failed to dissipate the anger of Egyptian public opinion, because the Egyptian people realize that his change of tone is no more than a cosmetic attempt and does not express a new political stand inclined toward recognizing the legitimate Arab rights.

Egypt: Turkey's Demirel on Military Agreement With Israel, Ties With Egypt

NC2407120696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Jul (MENA)—Turkish President Suleyman Demirel has affirmed his country's appreciation for President Husni Mubarak's continuous keenness to strengthen Egypt's relations, which during the past 15 years have been distinguished by friendship and cordiality.

Demirel said in an interview with the weekly magazine AL-MUSAWWAR to be published in its issue for the day after tomorrow, Friday [26 July], that he believes these relations will continue to improve, reflecting the fraternal relations between Egypt and Turkey.

The Turkish president stressed his country's determination to remove all obstacles to the strengthening of these relations. He said that if there are any problems that could stand in the way of our mutual relations, then we should sit down like brothers and friends and discuss these problems openly. He noted that this is precisely what happened during President Mubarak's recent visit to Ankara.

Egypt: Cairo Dailies Comment on Mubarak's U.S. Visit

NC2507093996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0520 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jul (MENA)— Cairo newspapers today stress that President Husni Mubarak, chairman of the Arab summit held in Cairo recently, will be carrying with him during his important visit to the United States next week facts, constants, and specific lines regarding the peace process in the Middle East. The papers point out that during his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton, President Mubarak will seek to further the interests of the Middle Eastern peoples, who must obtain their right to security, stability, and development and to live without ethnic or religious segregation and that the majority should enjoy the privileges enjoyed by the minority.

The papers note that foremost of these constants is the fact that the Palestinian issue is the crux of the conflict in

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the Middle East, and that the principle of land-for-peace is irreversible for the continuation of the negotiations for the fulfillment of the goals of each party. The papers say that talk of security first will not change the facts and terrorism will only beget more terror. The papers note the important fact that President Mubarak emphasized in his statement to the WASHINGTON POST, that unless tangible progress is made in the peace process in the next few months, specifically before the end of this year, the entire peace process will be in danger.

AL-AKHBAR's editorial says that President Mubarak's warning, that unless tangible progress is made in the peace process before the end of this year the entire process will be endangered, will top the agenda of his talks with President Clinton during his visit to Washington. Under the headline "The Time Factor Is Important in the Peace Process," the paper says that the effect of the U.S. elections on expediting or slowing down progress in the peace process cannot be denied, noting that the U.S. role is required now more than at any time before. It says that the Egyptian leadership made good preparations for this visit by sending Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first undersecretary and director of the President's Office For Political Affairs, to the United States to prepare the ground after some clouds overshadowed Egyptian-U.S. relations, as a result of a campaign launched by the Jewish lobby in the United States before and after Netanyahu's visit to Washington, a campaign that focused on Egypt's obtaining parts for Scud missiles from North Korea and its orchestration of efforts to restore Arab solidarity through the Arab summit in Cairo. The Jewish lobby considered these two episodes as a campaign basically aimed at Israel.

Under the headline "Mubarak and his Important Trip to Washington; Friends but We Have the Right to Differ," AL-JUMHURIYAH chief editor Mahfuz al-Ansari notes in his weekly column the special ties linking Egypt and the United States. He says: We accept friendship, cooperation, understanding, and dialogue. We also accept consultation and the exchange of views and information, and that differences in views, stands, and analysis are conceivable; but dictation, pressure, and coercion are out of the question.

Samir Rajab, chairman of AL-JUMHURIYAH board of directors, says President Mubarak will meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington next Tuesday bearing in mind all dimensions, developments, and details of the Middle East problem. He notes that the U.S. Administration already realizes that President Mubarak will be speaking on behalf of great masses of peoples, and consequently his discourse will be subject to meticulous analysis and careful examination. He says that President Mubarak will repeat to President Clinton that the Palestinian issue is the crux of the Middle East conflict and that the land-for-peace principle is irreversible for the continuation of the peace process.

In his daily column in AL-AHRAM, Salamah Ahmad Salamah stresses the importance of joint Arab efforts to convince the United States that its interests in the Arab World cannot be protected by security measures, military alliances, and the calls for combating terrorism, but by establishing a fair peace and contributing to solving the problems facing the peace process and emerging from its negative stalemate toward Israel. He says perhaps President Mubarak's visit to the United States at this particular time is the best opportunity to prevent the situation in the Middle East from getting out of control.

Egypt: 'Zionist Media' Charges Against Arabs in TWA Crash Decried

NC2407154496 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 21 Jul 96 p 1

[Editorial: "Why Do They Distort the Arabs' Image?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] All Arabs held their breath after a U.S. airliner crashed in flames into the ocean minutes after taking off from New York airport.

The reason for the Arabs' fear are the false accusations they have gotten used to seeing aimed at them by the Zionist media with or without reason.

The Zionist organs that control the Western media are continuing to distort the Arabs' image by depicting them as terrorist killers, as if terrorism and killing people are to be associated with the Arabs and no one else even though terrorism is everywhere. What happened in Oklahoma, Australia, Tasmania, Germany, and Ireland is evidence of this.

The peculiar thing is that these Zionist trumpets do not wait until investigations come out with the irrefutable truth but instead try from the first moments of any incident to accuse the Arabs. This has gone to the extent that Arab public opinion has regrettably started to accept these accusations. Every terrorist operation has become an Arab one.

In the Oklahoma incident it was proved that no Arabs were involved. An Australian perpetrated the incident there, while a British guy killed the school children in Scotland. So why this attempt to distort the Arabs' image?

Part of the rabid campaign organized by international Zionism against the Arabs and Muslims is to depict them as killers and criminals even though the Zionists

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have been killers and criminals throughout their ancient and modern history.

Why, for example, do we not accuse Zionism of being behind this ugly incident because its objective is to distort the Arabs' image to the world public and could have perpetrated the crime and blamed others for it in order to achieve its goals even at the expense of innocent victims.

On the fears created by the military agreement Turkey and Israel signed, President Demirel said that some have exaggerated this agreement for their own personal objectives and that we have clarified that it is merely a simple and limited agreement relating to cooperation in some fields of military training.

Demirel wondered why Turkey would be a party to an alliance that makes enemies with the Arabs and what would prompt it to set up a military alliance with Israel while it is a member of NATO. He said Turkey is a powerful country with armed forces that are capable of protecting its security proceeding from its advanced capabilities.

The Turkish president added that Turkey has one of the strongest and most advanced armies in the world. I do not believe we need the help of any other parties, he declared. In addition, we are a country that cares about peace and about the interests of its Arab brothers and neighbors.

Demirel affirmed that his country will never take a stance that goes against the rights and interests of the Arabs. It will not try to make enemies with its sisters in Islam and its neighbors. Nevertheless, he did admit the existence of difficult problems with Syria and other Arab countries. He said: However, we will manage to settle these problems through peaceful means.

The Turkish president refused to reveal the articles of the military agreement with Israel. He said that military training agreements are not open to the public because of their military nature. He pointed out that Turkey signed similar agreements with eight Arab countries and Iran, and the contents of these agreements were not revealed either.

Demirel repeated his confirmation that the agreement consists of training programs only, and that it is not directed against a third country. He confirmed that his country objects to the establishment of any military bloc in the Middle East which could further complicate the establishment of the aspired for permanent peace in the region.

The Turkish president expressed his confidence that the Middle East peace process will not stop because all the parties, including the Israeli people, feel that they have before them a golden opportunity that should not be squandered.

He said this is why settlement efforts will continue and why we will continue our support for all the parties, until comprehensive peace is established. Part of our duty will consist of working on encouraging the new Israeli leadership to adhere to its commitments and continue the peace march.

Answering a question on the various projects that talk about partitioning Iraq and how the tragic situation the Iraqi people are going through can be ended, the Turkish president said the basic principle of Turkey's policies toward Iraq is to preserve Iraq's regional unity and sovereignty.

The Turkish president warned that dividing or fragmenting Iraq will have grave consequences in the region that will lead to new conflicts. He expressed his belief that the existing problems in Iraq should now be resolved within the framework of the unity of Iraq's territory and that the political future of the country should be defined with the participation of all the people.

He affirmed that in order to put an end to the unnatural situation in Iraq, the Iraqi Government should comply with all the UN Security Council resolutions on this matter. He noted the fact that his country welcomes Iraq's reaching agreement on implementing Security Council Resolution 986, which will partially lessen the suffering of its innocent citizens.

The Turkish president affirmed his country's desire to keep relations with Syria cordial. Turkey wants to develop relations with Syria in all fields, he said. But, he added, what prevents the establishment of any real cooperation with Syria based on an honest desire is the fact that it continues to support the Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK]. We consider the PKK a terrorist organization which Syria should not support or give any security backing to.

On the Turkish role in encouraging peace efforts in Bosnia and reaching the Dayton agreement, President Demirel clarified that this agreement has opened a new peace era in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He stated that Turkey supported the restoral of rapprochement between the Muslims and Croats of Bosnia. It believes that this confederation should be given further support and all the conflicts between the Muslims and Croats of Bosnia and Serbia should be eliminated.

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Mauritania

Mauritania: Newspaper Censored Over Article Criticizing French Policy

LD2407145896 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The weekly newspaper MAURITANIE NOUVELLE has been censored by the interior ministry this morning. Both its French and Arabic editions are affected by the measure. In its editorial, MAURITANIE NOUVELLE criticized the speech given last Thursday [18 July] in Brazzaville [Congo] by Jacques Chirac, and questioned whether France really did want the countries in its sphere of influence to become democracies.

Sudan

Sudan: Democratic Alliance Denies Deterioration in Ties With Egypt

EA2507091396 (Clandestine) Voice of Sudan Voice of National Democratic Alliance in Arabic 0400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Mubarak al-Mahdi, secretary general of the National Democratic Alliance [NDA] has denied reports carried by newspapers in Khartoum and by the London-based AL-QUDS newspaper, which is funded by the Sudanese regime and Usama bin Ladin, alleging that Egypt has asked the secretary general not to return to its territory, an indication that relations between the NDA and Egypt have deteriorated. In a telephone conversation with Voice of Sudan Radio, al-Mahdi said the report is totally false, and stressed that the NDA's relations with Egypt were established to last. He added that the NDA and the presence of its members in Egypt is legal and conspicuous.

Sudan: MENA Reports on Student Demonstrations in Omdurman

NC2407161096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1535 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 24 Jul (MENA)—Omdurman University was closed today and security forces surrounded it following two days of severe disturbances between students affiliated with the opposition National Democratic Grouping [NDG] and the pro-National Islamic Front [NIF] students.

The pro-NIF students had refrained from nominating candidates for the university student union elections for fear of losing, as happened in the elections held at Khartoum University and al-Nilayn University (formerly the Khartoum branch of Cairo University). They asked the university administration to halt the elections, but it refused to do so as this would violate the election law. This prompted the Islamic Front students to threaten to occupy the administration offices.

The announcement that the NDG ticket had won the election unopposed led to an escalation in troubles and to clashes between the two sides. Pro-NDG students demonstrated and this prompted the authorities to close the university and surround it with security forces to protect it from the demonstrations.

Sudan: DUP's al-Hindi on Prospects of Dialogue

MM2407153296 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 22-28 Jul 96 pp 16-18

[Interview with Sudanese politician al-Sharif Zayn-al-'Abidin al- Hindi by Mu'awiyah Yasin; date, place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yasin] You describe yourself as the secretary general of the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] and you say that you have risen to reform the party institution, but the other wing of the party says that you are a "former" secretary general. Furthermore, many of your own supporters say that your meeting and dialogue with Lieutenant General al-Bashir... [sentence unfinished as published]

[Al-Hindi] There are many concepts which, if not explained, cause great confusion and fog. Our party has no leader because, quite simply, we did not elect a leader after the death in 1969 of President Isma'il al-Azhari. During the years of the May regime which was headed by (former) President Ja'far Numayri we were in disarray and did not have a chance to catch up with those who, through reconciliation with Numayri in 1977, were able to look after the structures of their parties. Our party was unable to build its institutions and has not held a general congress to this day.

As the first generation of the party founders have died, our present state of fragmentation can only mean the formation of a party institution capable of rallying party members around a clear and unified program, after which the party's general congress would be held. There is no disagreement between us and al-Sayyid (Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani) except the fact that he did not contemplate that possibility.

[Yasin] You have not answered the question. You took a serious step when you held a dialogue with al-Bashir, and you did not consult anyone on it...

[Al-Hindi] That was a sudden development but there is much consultation between us now at local level, and we have not found anyone who disagrees with us because the initiative is of interest to all the Sudanese

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and not just DUP members. We are now concentrating on the objectivity of the initiative and whether or not it addresses the current situation in Sudan.

Actually, our logical analysis is that the opposition is now fragmented into groups and factions, each maintaining its own identity. They talk about coordination but they do not issue any collective decisions. I mean decisions relevant to Sudan with all its trends and parties.

[Yasin] You have recently said that your are a "rejectionist" and not an "oppositionist." What exactly do you mean?

[Al-Hindi] There is, of course, a semantic difference between the two expressions. If those who can hear me would calm down they would see the difference clearly. Which is stronger, rejection or opposition? Rejection means that you reject any repressive military regime and any civilian dictatorial regime. That is a firm position in our party's policy. We began our rejection as far back as 25 May 1969 [when Numayri seized power], and that has continued to this day. It is a rejection of a pyramid built in May and its peak is now represented by the regime in Sudan.

Opposition is the activation of that rejection, but is that to be undertaken by a partisan entity or by the entire country? The October 1964 revolution and the 1985 uprising were a comprehensive national rejection, with the participation of all the Sudanese people, whose rejection was transformed into opposition which changed the regime. Therefore, rejection is a strategic concept and the tactics pertaining to it are a kind of opposition.

[Yasin] If you are advocating a dialogue, should not that dialogue be between you and al-Mirghani and those who stood with him against your views, before it becomes a direct dialogue with Lt. Gen. al-Bashir?

[Al-Hindi] Yes, that is what is supposed to happen but the disagreement between us within the party is not objective because al-Sayyid (al-Mirghani) broke away with an administration which we could attribute to the old People's Party or consider it purely sectarian because it is more a grouping of supporters than a political or national grouping. That is why I see no point of objective disagreement between us to hold a dialogue on. That is why the matter should be taken to the general DUP arena in Sudan, and let the masses there be the judge.

But dialogue between us and the other groups, especially the Ummah Party and other political entities, is open to this day, because we believe that the national cause will bring the people together in a unified social, political, and economic mold capable of rescuing the country from the general crisis gripping it.

[Yasin] The Ummah Party abroad rejects you, and at home its leader al-Sadiq al-Mahdi says that the government is using you to divide the opposition. Which Ummah party are you talking about?

[Al-Hindi] We and the Ummah Party have been joined by years of struggle and military jihad which was called invasion of the mercenaries (July 1976). Ours was a warm patriotic relationship, so much so that we nearly united as an entity. That was in the days of the old Nationalist Front which also included the Muslim Brotherhood and the communists.

When I talk about the Ummah Party I am talking about people with whom we had the common bond of incalculable suffering and unfulfilled hopes. That link between us continues and is still alive.

[Yasin] Which faction of the Ummah Party are you talking about?

[Al-Hindi] I am talking about the al-Ansar entity, because the real unionist vision is one which sees all the country's problems as every citizen's problems. I am talking about the problems addressed by the party in its coalition with the Ummah Party's wing of Imam al-Hadi (al-Mahdi) by charting the rules of true democracy and sound approach in Sudan. These are principles we still believe in and are struggling for.

We see the corrective movement in the Ummah Party as a real movement reflecting a national appeal by compatriots who have decided to move out of any particular sectarian road and into a road of political openness. We respect all the Sufist doctrines in our country but we are against sectarian excesses in the political field.

[Yasin] You yourself belong to a sect and a great dynasty. The way you put it seems illogical. Where do you place yourself?

[Al-Hindi] Let me go back to the difference between rejection and opposition, and let me ask: What is a sect? I belong to a certain Sufist doctrine which has nothing to with political action and which has had nothing to do with the political fabric in Sudan since the advent of the modern nationalist movement in the forties. I very much respect and abide by my doctrine but it does not interfere in politics and I do not depend on it in my political life. But I do not respect sects which turn mainly spiritual values into purely materialist objectives.

[Yasin] You recently said that the regime promised to let you conduct an open dialogue with the masses. When

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will you do that, and is the intention here the masses of your party or the masses of the opposition in general?

[Al-Hindi] I want to hold a dialogue with the Sudanese masses in general, who are now in isolation from the regime at home and from the so-called opposition abroad which is split into different fragments. All the Sudanese people are now living in isolation from these two entities. So they have to be asked and they have to answer: Do they support the government and are they satisfied with it, or do they support the opposition and expect it to interact with them?

Any claim by any political group in Sudan or any sectarian leader that this sect or that group can work miracles in the country is a delusion and is false because the homeland now is faced with a situation that is out of the hands of the government and the opposition. They [the Sudanese people] are in isolation facing possible sanctions and their land is open to anyone who can carry a gun.

I do not believe that the government has sought to pacify me. It picked up the gauntlet and said that it would have no objection to contributing to our initiative aimed at bringing the Sudanese people together on the same ground to express a clear and unified view as to what kind of future they want for their country. We now have a national crisis and we are all called upon to contribute to a resolution of that crisis through our patriotic and not partisan inclinations. We are in a house that is collapsing, with others taking what is left of it.

[Yasin] It has been claimed that you intended to return to Sudan, but then you stated that you preferred sending some "vanguards" to Khartoum before returning yourself. What is your real position on that?

[Al-Hindi] The vanguards are in two parts, one is secret and known only to God. It consists of people who know the land and its people. They have gone to Sudan to pass a message. The other is an announced official delegation which will go to Sudan to see for itself and find out whether or not the government will undertake the dialogue we talked about. They are ready for sacrifice, even if they are taken to the "house of ghosts."

After they report to us, I will go myself if necessary because such a sacrifice must be made in any way. The reason for all this is not the government or the opposition but the Sudanese people who await the sound voice of someone who cares about them and their land.

[Yasin] In other words, you are neither with the government nor with the opposition....

[Al-Hindi] Those who dream about the opposition without knowing its details and its feeble attempts abroad, would in reality find it ridiculous. Furthermore, one little glance at the quality of the (current) regime and its practices in the country would show that it has violated every ruling tradition in the country. Both are isolated from the people.

[Yasin] What is the mechanism of the dialogue you call for, and at what level would it be held?

[Al-Hindi] We want it to be a dialogue at all levels at home and abroad, at the regional and international levels, and even at UN level so that all the peoples of the world know that that is the will of the Sudanese people for change and that their revolutions and uprisings do not belong to any particular leader or party. That is the way to revive respect for the Sudanese people in the states which now boycott them.

As regards the mechanism, that would have to be through all the people. Everyone should demonstrate openness to others. The dialogue between the Sudanese people has never stopped but the confusion has increased and so has the false propaganda of the opposition and the authorities.

[Yasin] Should this dialogue of yours lead to participation in the current regime?

[Al-Hindi] That would be determined by the will of the Sudanese people who, incidentally, cannot be ruled militarily. In all the years of military rule they have kept entering the attack and the defense, until the military won.

It is also important to say that they also cannot be ruled on the basis of the democratic concept of the recent past, of which I was a part. There must be a new, specific, and mature democracy. Our initiative extends even to (Colonel John) Garang, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Chad, and Uganda.

[Yasin] It extends to Garang, etc. What do you mean by that?

[Al-Hindi] Garang should be asked what he wants. He is a Sudanese citizen fighting for an ambiguous right.

[Yasin] You have been quoted as saying that the meeting with al-Bashir came as a surprise to you....

[Al-Hindi] Undoubtedly.

[Yasin] But the government press and the independent press loyal to it (especially AKHBAR AL-YAWM) said that you were invited to meet with him at the home of the Sudanese ambassador in Cairo.

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[Al-Hindi] No...al-Bashir did not visit me at my home [as published]. I was sitting in one of Cairo's hotels and it never occurred to me that he would meet me, considering that he was preoccupied with the Arab summit conference which brought him to Egypt. Even when I got into a friend's car at his kind invitation, I did not know anything about our destination. When I found myself in the al-Ma'adi quarter I realized that we were heading for the Sudanese ambassador's home because I used to live in that quarter and knew it well. I was surprised by what was happening and I said to my companion: We have been kidnapped! We entered the ambassador's house and waited for about an hour for something I knew nothing about. I told the man I went there with that I considered myself a prisoner on Sudanese territory, jokingly.

I was surprised when Lt. Gen. al-Bashir entered the room and greeted me in the genuine informal Sudanese way. I say this as a matter of fact, and I would not hesitate to describe the man as he is. That does not mean that I went seeking a meeting with him. He received me the Sudanese way and he introduced himself. We found ourselves two Sudanese people facing the fact that we were away from home, and this necessitated such a reception.

[Yasin] What were your impressions of him?

[Al-Hindi] We talked without restrictions. One of the important things he said was that he praised the role of the DUP (noting that I am a DUP member), as if to say that as the DUP had various factions, he was turning to the nonfactional DUP [al-Hindi]. He told me: We all grew up in DUP environments, some of us turned to the (National Islamic) Front [NIF] while others turned to the left and became communists, socialists, or nationalists. These are details of Sudanese society which I knew perhaps even before al-Bashir himself was born.

He also told me ruling is not our business, and that is why we have made mistakes, only God is infallible, and that is why we said that we would lay down the foundations of a certain trend then hand over the business of baking bread to the bakers. He spoke as a patriot and not as a president to a subordinate. And that is how we were in agreement on the general national approach that would include all of us.

There would have been no point in refusing to meet with him or avoiding meeting him. I talked with him about all that is being said and what has happened to Sudan. I believe that there is an area where all people could meet. There is no need for declaring enmity without people knowing why they are hostile to one another.

[Yasin] What has happened has happened. Tell me frankly, what result would the dialogue you advocate produce?

[Al-Hindi] The result of the dialogue is unknown. It might, brother, lead to the regime's downfall or to a popular confrontation that all the regime's weapons would be unable to tackle, or the dialogue could lead to a change of the method the regime has applied over the past seven years, and it could result in restoration of respect for Sudan in international circles. It could lead to disagreement or harmony.

We definitely do not at all intend to participate in the government. I told President al-Bashir that when rulers are joined by a politician belonging to a party, he will confuse both them and himself, because he will not be able to proceed with a program he is not familiar with and knows nothing about. That is why the ruler should bear the trust and the responsibility. The basis of government is simply that the Sudanese people want to eat, drink, sleep securely, and to be able to honor their guests. If you ensure all that you will stay in power and nobody will bother you, but if you do not then you will not remain in power, and the same thing applies to us. That is a collective Sudanese mechanism and it is the demand of all the people except those who want power by force such as the present government and the current opposition.

[Yasin] It is indeed strange that you call for dialogue and at the same time refuse to hold a dialogue with the people closest to you — by that I mean the Sudanese opposition living in Cairo like you. Do you not agree with me?

[Al-Hindi] We addressed the Democratic National Grouping in 1990 on the independence anniversary. We objected to the structural formation of the Grouping and criticized it objectively. We said that it contained fabricated names such as unions and parties, and that it contained some leaderships which should apologize to the Sudanese people, who they thought had forgotten much of what they had done. We waited for their reply but it never came. All that the Grouping has been doing all these years is to look for a comfortable structure without finding it, not even in the camps they set up in the name of the tribes (Alija - the southerners), with the exception of the forces of (Brigadier) 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khalid.

[Yasin] Many of the Grouping members are annoyed by your criticism of the Grouping and claim that you have had close links with the NIF since the beginning of its coup.

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[Al-Hindi] These are the weapons used by failed people. They even accused me of having known in advance of the 1989 coup. Did you hear that? That is a lie. If I had any links or channels with them [the NIF] I would have acted accordingly with courage, but how could that be when I am tortured and exiled from my homeland, relatives, and memories?

[Yasin] It has also been claimed, for instance, that you left Sudan early (before the coup), having stopped attending the parliamentary session. Many people saw that as an indication of your position.

[Al-Hindi] I was not sulking. I stopped attending the sessions of the Constituent Assembly (parliament) because it did not reflect the latent rejection of the Numayri regime. The uprising ended up being led by the Mayists (Numayri's supporters). And I say now that the current NIF regime sits at the top of the Mayist pyramid.

[Yasin] Your detractors, and even your supporters, criticize you by saying that you are closer to literature than to politics, and that your standard of discussion is higher than the standard of the masses you want to hold a dialogue with.

[Al-Hindi] That is true because I prefer to keep to myself because political activity now has many blemishes and is no longer clean, patriotic, honorable, or a good example. That is why I prefer to stay away lest I suffocate.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Bahraini Woman Reportedly Dies After Police Beating

NC2507084696 Paris AFP in English 0829 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, July 25 (AFP) - A 55-year-old Shiite Muslim woman died this week after she was beaten by the police in a Bahraini village west of the capital, here relatives told AFP.

The authorities on Thursday [25 July] issued no statement about the report after being asked to comment on it a day earlier.

Policemen on Monday night beat Zahrah Ibrahim Kazim, a mother of six children who has suffered heart problems, while she protested the arrest of a 15-year-old son outside the family home in Bani Jamrah village, relatives said.

The relatives who asked not to be named said she bore traces of the beating when her daughters brought her into the house and that rubber bullets lay strewn in the street.

She was declared dead as the ambulance took her to the hospital. A medical examiner examined her body for several minutes without carrying out an autopsy nor handing out a death certificate, relatives said.

Zahrah was buried in Bani Jamrah on Tuesday.

With the latest death, at least 23 people have been killed in unrest which erupted in December 1994 led by Shiite Muslim protestors urging the Sunni Muslim led government to restore the parliament it suspended in 1975.

The mainly Shiite opposition says the list of "martyrs" is much longer, adding that 28 people have been killed by security forces which are made up mostly of Pakistanis and other foreigners.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Deputy Interior Minister on Security Concerns, Cooperation

LD2507111196 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0015 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 24 Jul — The deputy interior minister, His Royal Highness Prince Ahmad Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al- Sa'ud, expressed his satisfaction in attending the graduation ceremony at the Higher Institute of Security Science. At the end of the ceremony, he made a statement to the press, and said: "Security is everybody's concern. This activity is shared by all the citizens and the residents, all of them are security men, security is theirs and it is for their benefit."

He said: "Solidarity, cooperation, and joint work for security are a fundamental issue and a religious obligation."

As for Arab cooperation in security, he said that the Arab Center for Security Studies and Training is the result of Arab cooperation in security.

He said: "The Arab Council of Ministers and the committees emanating from it on the various levels and activities do meet during the year, as well as the Secretariat of the Arab Council of Ministers, in order to achieve further cooperation of mutual Arab security."

He expressed his hope for furthering this cooperation for the benefit of the Arab societies.

As for the signing of a joint Arab agreement on security, he said that there is good will and mutual cooperation, and the agreement that will organize this issue will be a positive tool for mutual Arab work.

On the issue of signing a joint agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen during the Yemeni interior minister's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia next week, Prince Ahmad Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz said that there is cooperation between the two brother countries in various fields, particularly in security, and that the agreement will be announced in due course, God willing.

Concerning the al-Khubar explosion, he also said: "There is a serious follow-up and investigations still going on, and if there were any positive results, they would have been announced to the public and to the entire international community and, God willing, the investigations will yield results which will be announced."

Concerning coordination between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, in spite of the fact that Kuwait did not sign the Gulf security agreement, his highness said there is an old and continuing security coordination between the two fraternal countries, although no agreement was signed.

In answer to a question on new appointments in the Interior Ministry, he said: "The ministry is serious about consolidating its human resources in all the sectors with cadres. There are those who are going to leave because of retirement or for personal reasons, and they will be replaced naturally from time to time."

His highness wished success to the graduates.

In answer to a question on the future of the Arab Center for Security Studies and training, he said that the center

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is making continuous progress and hoped that there would be more Arab participants in the studies of the center so that the benefit would be greater and wider.

Concerning security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, he said: "Regarding accidents or events, the truth is self-explanatory: In the past, the present, and the future, they happen in every country and in all times and places. The important thing is that such matters are part and parcel of societies and of their history. We are part of this world and we will make our best efforts, God willing, to keep our faith in the unity of our Constitution, the Holy Koran, and the virtuous tradition of the prophet under the leadership of the servant of the two holy places, King Fahd Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, and his highness the crown prince, and his highness the second deputy prime minister, and under the supervision of his highness the interior minister, Prince Nayf Bin-'Abd al- 'Aziz."

He said: "We consider all the citizens and residents as security men and security, God willing, is prevailing, and it will get even better, and people will enjoy comfort, security, tranquillity, and a prosperous future in spite of the fact that there are those who claim the opposite. However, we cannot stop those who envy us from spreading their poison secretly from time to time, but the self- explanatory truth will prevail."

In answer to a question on the U.S. State Department's decision to give the families of U.S. nationals working in the Kingdom the choice of whether to leave or to remain, he said that each person is free to decide in these matters.

Yemen

Yemen: Official Criticizes Statements by Eritrean President

JN2407065396 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to the YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA', today, an official Foreign Ministry source said the statements by Eritrean President Isaias Afworki to the Saudi magazine AL-WASAT, accusing Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, of being behind the complications that accompanied the Yemeni-Eritrean crisis, are regrettable.

The source said: We are confident that President Isaias Afworki is not convinced of these false accusations against Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani. The primary cause of the crisis between Yemen and Eritrea is well-known. Specifically, it is Eritrea's attack on and occupation of Yemen's al-Hanish al-Kabir Island. In this act, the Eritrean officials showed no respect for their neighbors' rights or the brotherly relations that have always existed between the two neighboring peoples and countries.

The source concluded: Instead of fabricating false charges against others and attempting to mislead the public opinion about the reality of what had happened in the southern Red Sea area, the Eritrean leadership should avoid stalling and procrastination tactics and should not seek to reestablish an atmosphere of regional tension. Rather, it should work seriously to find a peaceful solution to the problem through international arbitration. Yemen accepted this arbitration out of its sense of responsibility toward the international community and to spare the region any conflict or tension that would not serve regional security, stability, and peace.

Yemen: Yemeni Reform Grouping Members' Homes Attacked

MM2407112396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Jul 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Naji al-Harazi: "Attacks on Homes of Yemeni Reform Grouping Members"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sanaa — Sources of the Yemeni Reform Grouping [YRG], partner in the government coalition in Yemen, revealed yesterday that a powerful explosion had occurred near the home of a YRG member in the Barim [as transliterated] area of Ibb Governorate, namely 'Abd-al-Latif al-Arji, member of the committee supervising the elections in Constituency 114. The sources believe that the explosion is linked to the current competition among the parties in the run-up to the elections, scheduled to be held next year, and that it resulted in the smashing of windows, terrorizing children and women and spreading alarm in the area.

The sources said in a letter addressed to the Yemeni interior minister that on the day of the explosion unidentified elements attacked the home of YRG member 'Abdallah 'Ali Rakban, smashing its windows and those of his car. And two people broke into the home of Yahya 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Thawr, head of the executive committee of the YRG's branch in Barim, at dawn the day before yesterday and tried to attach a bomb to one of the windows in the house, but al- Thawr's mother alerted him and his brothers.

The sources urged the interior minister to take all the necessary measures to maintain security and stability and to hit out at those who planned and carried out these operations, which they described as terrorist, in order to spare blood and lives. [passage omitted]

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Iraq: UN's Ekeus Comments on Baghdad's Lack of Cooperation

LD2407192996 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of the UN Special Commission for disarming Iraq from weapons of mass destruction, Rolf Ekeus, has stressed that the Iraqi authorities, by obstructing his team has delayed the day when he could declare that Iraq is free from banned weapons, a major step in lifting the sanctions imposed on it since the invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Ekeus said in a statement to the Kuwaiti News Agency that Iraq's scheme for hiding banned weapons is confirmed each time it prevents the UN inspection team from searching locations suspected to hold weapons or documents on its banned armament programs.

Iraq: Interception of Iraqi Fishing Boats Protested to UN

JN2407063796 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 23 Jul (INA)—Iraq informed the United Nations that, on 12 July, a frigate in the northern waters of the Arabian Gulf asked the Iraqi tugboat Taj al-Ma'arik, anchored south of the Iraqi port of al-Bakr, not to move. The frigate also sent a helicopter to fly over the tugboat.

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent representative at the United Nations, sent a letter to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus- Ghali in which he said that, on 13 July, a rubber boat carrying 10 armed Australians approached the Iraqi tugboat. Eight of the armed men searched the tugboat on the pretext that it was carrying weapons, but left it without finding anything.

The letter pointed out that the Australian frigate 5-Melbourne sent another rubber boat carrying five armed Australians to the Iraqi fishing boat Zubaydah, which was anchored near the tugboat Taj al-Ma'arik. The armed men searched the fishing boat and left it without finding anything aboard it.

Ambassador Hamdun requested the UN secretary general to intervene with the Australian Government to prevent such unjustified, hostile, and provocative actions against Iraqi civilian ships in flagrant violation of the UN Charter and international law. Such actions, he said, will also create a state of tension and instability in this part of the region.

In another letter from Hamdun to the UN secretary general, Iraq protested the interception of the Iraqi launch Karim by a Kuwaiti sea patrol while the launch was fishing in Iraqi territorial waters in Khawr 'Abdallah on 6 July.

The letter pointed out that the Kuwaiti patrol searched the launch, but did not find anything. The patrol, however, seized the launch and its crew for one night and then released them after questioning the crew about other ships in Khawr 'Abdallah.

The letter also asked the UN secretary general to intervene with Kuwait to stop such provocative actions against Iraqi fishing boats in Iraqi territorial waters, pointing out that these actions conflict with the UN Charter and international law.

The letter also stressed Iraq's legal right to compensation for damages sustained by its citizens and property in accordance with international responsibility.

Ambassador Hamdun asked that both letters be distributed as Security Council documents.

Iraq: 'Scores' Arrested in Wake of Jun Attempt To Kill Saddam

MM2507102396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jul 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Al-Samarra'i Says: Saddam's Downfall Just Matter of Time"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Iraqi oppositionist Wafiq al-Samarra'i, former chief of the Iraqi military intelligence service, has said that "Saddam Husayn's downfall is a matter of time." He expects a military explosion bigger than the recent one, to which scores of officers and Iraqi citizens fell victim, to take place.

He confirmed over the telephone from his residence in the Syrian capital, Damascus, that an attempt to assassinate the Iraqi president did take place in Baghdad recently.

He said that this attempt will cause some of the European states sympathizing with President Saddam Husayn to know the nature of the situation in the country. He added: "Saddam's own guards tried to assassinate him and rescue Iraq and the Iraqis from him, so you can imagine the citizens' feelings."

Regarding his revelation of the chemical and biological weapons in Iraq's possession, al-Samarra'i said that Iraqis are dying of hunger and yet the regime continues to retain weapons Iraq does not need. He stressed that the Iraqis want a peaceful homeland in which to live a free and dignified life, saying that Iraq will not need such mass-destruction weapons after the departure of Saddam Husayn's regime. He pointed out that these

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weapons are intended for the Iraqi people, and Saddam Husayn did indeed use them against Iraqi Kurds and civilians during the 1991 uprising. They were not used during the second Gulf war. He said that he [Saddam Husayn] did not want to use these weapons.

On last month's attempt on President Saddam Husayn, al-Samarra'i said that Saddam's own guards tried to assassinate him, but the plan failed and scores of commanders, officers, and civilians were arrested. He expressed his regret for the failure of the attempt, saying that the next step is expected to be more organized and powerful. He stressed that "the next explosion is approaching and imminent and will rid Iraq of the Saddam Husayn regime so that the Iraqis can live in peace."

Meanwhile, Iraqi opposition sources have said in Amman that the arrest campaign being launched by Iraqi security services against Iraqi military men and civilians is still continuing.

Iraq: Prisoners Escape From Baghdad, Mosul Cells; Clashes Near Mosul Noted

NC2407163296 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to sources close to the regime's Interior Ministry, a rebellion has occurred in the detention cells of the police headquarters in Baghdad's al-Rasafah neighborhood. Two sentries were killed and 40 prisoners escaped during this rebellion. The sources said that when the regime's police failed to control the situation, they were forced to request the assistance of the so-called Special Security Forces commanded by the tyrant's son Qusayy. The Special Security Forces pursued the escapees and arrested 16 of them.

In another development, Iraqi opposition sources revealed that 100 political detainees were liberated from the Mosul Prison in an attack carried out by an anti-regime group last Saturday [20 July]. The sources said that two of the attackers were martyred. They added that there was much unrest in Mosul in the wake of the attack and the regime's security forces closed off all roads leading into and out of the city.

Other sources reported that armed clashes have occurred between members of the regime's military intelligence service on one side and members of the regime's General Security and the General Intelligence Service on the other at the (Aksi Kalak) checkpoint on the road between Mosul and Irbil. This is one of the major checkpoints separating the liberated areas of northern Iraq from the areas under the control of the Baghdad government.

The two groups clashed over the share each side should have from the bribes and protection money collected from the citizens who use the checkpoint.

Iraq: MIO's Science, Technology 'Successes' Reported

JN2407123796 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 15 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Basil al-Khatib]

[FBIS Translated Text] The mujihidin of the industrial sector, particularly in the science- and technology-based military industrialization effort, have been exemplary in keeping faith with the guidelines set by the glorious 17-30 July revolution and its historic leadership. They have been particularly successful as a potent weapon in the hands of the leadership and the nation as they strive to secure the various aspects of national security.

In the face of the hate-driven barbaric military aggression — both direct and indirect — the industrial sector, led by the mujahidin personnel of the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO], continues to distinguish itself in its duties. At some industrial sites, they have even had to put up with UN inspectors wreaking havoc on tables, chairs, cooling equipment, and water coolers! The MIO workers, against the formidable odds of a flagrant sanctions regime and defying the expectations of friend and foe alike, have attained remarkable scientific and technological successes, whether measured against standards of quality or quantity. They have energized and marshalled Iraqi scientific and technical efforts to keep the wheels of life turning and sustain patience under unprecedentedly harsh conditions.

The brilliance of the mujahidin of the industrial sector and military industrialization has manifested itself most clearly in an unpublicized effort that remains largely unknown. They have been busy providing the requirements of various sectors of production in order to keep the wheel of life running — a wheel that aggressors have sought to stop, sending Iraq back to the Dark Ages. The mujahidin have managed to process many raw materials and other items needed to break loose from the bottlenecks and bring factories and lines of production back on stream — facilities that were formerly completely dependent on imports. This has been made possible thanks to real and painstaking scientific effort and research, the fruits of which are there for all to see. Future generations will remember these results as a brilliant chapter in our history.

Applied research by the Center for Plastics Industries, which is part of the State Enterprise for Extracting and Mining Operations, bears testimony to the brilliance

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and excellence of the MIO mujihidin. The center has been converted to turn out mostly traditional goods based on locally obtained raw materials and to fill the need of various lines of production, like tires, batteries, confectionery, electrical appliances, and textile and leather industries. Not to mention the big economies achieved by the research.

Exhibit 1

Exploiting substances acquired locally, researchers at the Center have succeeded in preparing phenolic molding, bakelite, which, as one of the constituents in the production of a range of manufactured goods, is of critical importance. With the price of an imported tonnes of this substance around $5,000, the innovation has proved cost-effective. The bakelite has a proven good mechanical value and a high degree of electrical and thermal insulation, as well as resistance to flames and electric spark. Such specifications as these render the bakelite particularly suited for use in the manufacture of engineering parts and fittings for electrical, household, and electronic industries, among applications. This substance also goes into the manufacture of circuit breakers, mains, electric wiring base for industrial motors, and main electrical switchboards. It has also been possible to manufacture high-voltage sockets to conduct electricity between railway passenger cars, making it possibe to bring a large number of trains rendered idle due to a sanctions-induced lack of this important part back into service.

Given the importance of this locally available substance and the urgent need for it, the go-ahead has been given to build a production facility with the capacity to turn out 400 tonnes of manufacturing machinery per year at a low cost, relative to the expected returns. The machinery may be used to produce various types of phenolic molding equipment, which will open the door wide to new practical applications. Using simple manual methods, the Center produces approximately five tonnes of bakelite annually.

Exhibit 2

Researchers at the center have succeeded in preparing a substance that can act as a substitute for the pliolite rubber used in the manufacture of casings for liquid batteries. The pliolite rubber is derived from synthetic polymers that are composed of satarin and biotadayin [names as transliterated]. Locally obtained ingredients that go into its preparation account for 95 percent of the total input. The output meets the local needs for the frames of liquid batteries, as well as the requirements of the State Enterprise for the Production of Batteries for 120 tonnes of batteries per year. It would have cost approximately $2,700 per tonne to import this substance.

Exhibit 3

The center's researchers have succeeded in supporting the State Enterprise for Woolen Industries and ensuring its continued operation by meetings its needs for adhesives used to manufacture carpeting.

It has been possible to process a special brand of polyvinyl ratine, the adhesive properties of which have been used in the manufacture of penetrative carpeting and the semiautomated carpeting. This substance is a key component in the manufacture of carpets, and it meets the needs of the local Iraqi market. Additionally, its production results in a savings of foreign currency, because it would cost about $3,000 per tonne to import.

On another front, the center's researchers have succeeded in devising a dye fastener for silk and cotton fabrics during the imprinting process. Acrylic polymers and other substances obtainable locally are used in the process. Thus it has become possible to produce acrylic ratine at levels of production capacities that meet the needs of the local markets, estimated at more than 75 tonnes per year. It would cost about $2,000 per tonne to import this substance.

Exhibit 4

The center's mujahidin have succeeded in preparing polyvinyl glues that can be used in the manufacturing of cigarettes. This type of glue typically has a powerful adhesive property and optimum drying time. There are various types of these glues: the emulsified adhesive used on cigarette paper, of which 150 tonnes used to be imported annually at a cost of $1,850 per tonnes; the emulsified adhesive used on cigarette packs, of which 85 tonnes used to be imported at a cost of $1,850 per tonne; and the emulsified adhesive used on cigarette filters, of which 70 tonnes used to be imported annually at a cost of $3,184 per tonne. These glues, which are kinds of water emulsions, are all the more economical given that they can be produced in Iraq.

The center's researchers have succeeded in manufacturing a thermal adhesive that can be used by the Tobacco and Cigarettes State Enterprise in its wrapping and packaging processes. A prototype was developed for the production of this adhesive. The center is capable of producing enough of this adhesive to meet the requirements of the industrial sector. It would have cost about $6,150 per tonne to import this adhesive.

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Exhibit 5

The center's researchers have made another qualitative contribution. They have supported the tire industry by preparing a substance to substitute for the formerly imported polykaolin clay coal [transliteration as published]. The processing of this substance has been approved by the parent company. After it is mixed with a number of solvents, the substance is used in the manufacture of tires. This mixture is used in the molding phase to keep the tires from sticking to the inner rubber and the mold's metal surface. The Center's researchers used aromatic esters as a local substitute for the formerly imported substance. It has proved its efficacy in the production of tires. The need for this substance by national tire makers has been filled locally since 1994. The price of an imported tonne would have been around $3,000.

Strategic Direction

The research by the Plastics Research Center marks a significant qualitative addition to Iraq's scientific and technological efforts. It is an eloquent expression of a hard-nosed approach to research in the industrial sector as an irreversible option. More than that, the Iraqi scientists are inspired by the guidelines of the glorious revolution of 17-30 July and its astute leadership and use it as a virtual manual. This is bound to have a positive effect on Iraq's industrial infrastructure and, by extension, the country's economy. This is in addition to its obvious importance and the fact that it supplies a bright spot for these bleak and difficult times. Doesn't it?

Iraq: INA Reviews Radio, TV History

JN2507074796 Baghdad INA in English 1049 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, July 24, INA—Making the 28th anniversary of July 17 Revolution brings to memory an endless list of achievements which have touched all walks of life throughout Iraq.

But for a natural observer, the achievements acquire a wider prospect considering the conditions that accompanied their realization.

On the 1st of July the Baghdad broadcasting station celebrated the 60th anniversary of its foundation. The anniversary by itself might pass unnoticed, except, probably, for a couple of people who had spent a lifetime there, but for others the station serves as a model example of the revolution's adherence to one of the vital establishments.

The station which was the first in the Arab region started with a 3-hour a day transmission at that time and with the absence of necessary government offices, it was affiliated to the post office of the Ministry of Interior.

The building was simply a bungalow which could serve as anything but not to house a broadcasting station. Probably it was acceptable for the 1930s standards.

People, however were happy with the "wireless station of Iraqi Government" as it has been called.

They thought of it a sort of magical as they listened to the wooden box producing different sounds and tunes.

Years went by and nothing changed. "For twenty years nothing of much importance took place as if it was forgotten," Husayn Hafidh, who joined the Baghdad station in 1956 told ALIF BA' weekly.

Hafidh, currently the director of Baghdad station, added the already simply equipment were quite old and the staff depended on those more.

When July 14, 1958 revolution which toppled the monarchy regime took place, Baghdad radio became an independent body.

It was affiliated along with the 2-year old Baghdad TV, to the newly established Ministry of Guidance.

It is worth to mention here that the Baghdad TV was, as the radio had been, the first in the Arab region.

The TV station was also a small one that served an area not larger than capital which was by itself a small city.

Again things remained as they had been both organs were in dire need of new equipment.

The radio and the TV which were the first to be installed, were quickly becoming rust machines, as none cared for modernising them.

So when the July 17, 1968 revolution took place it had to deal with an accumulation of problems in all fields of life for these two organs.

They were still in 1968 lacking many things which could make them give a better service.

From the early years, the revolution adhered special attention to these organs, which are now part of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

First of all money was allocated to build a new premises.

Then adopted and hightech equipment were installed and at the same time several batches of staff were sent abroad to get the best of training.

In 1970 a second broadcasting station was launched, Sawt al- Jamahir, "Voice of the Masses", in a move to expand media service in Iraq.

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Still aiming for the best, measures were taken to have a coloured TV. The project was ready in 1976.

The Department of Radio and TV emerged late in 1970 equipped with the best of technology could present a well-trained staff.

They all have to put their experience into test when the Iraq- Iran war broke out in 1980.

They faced an extraordinary mission: to cover the battles at a frontline stretching for hundreds of miles.

The staff was up to the job.

During 8 years of war, radio and TV correspondents were ready covering all events at the battle fronts. TV cameramen proved they were up the test.

They shot thousands of meters of films documenting various offensives.

Many cameramen lost their lives while doing their job.

The 8-year of war made Iraqi TV cameramen among the most experienced in the world.

As from August 1990 Iraq was subject to most cruel press campaign. Both the radio and the TV had to deal with all sorts of fabrications against Iraq, its leadership and people.

And once again they were up to the test.

During the US-led aggression in January 1991, the premises of radio and TV as well as other relay stations throughout Iraq received a series of devastating blows. Some relay stations were leveled with the ground.

The enemy believed that they had achieved the mission. The station worked from other one substitute.

After the war and with round-the clock efforts reconstruction work-started to bring everything back.

With the assistance of technicians the Baghdad radio and TV were back.

Probably by the late 1990s standards, of space transmission, the high-tech equipment, the Iraqi bodies might occupy the bottom of the list.

But a rapid review of what had been done 1968-90 and after 1991, the scale would once again be in Iraq's benefit.

The extraordinary conditions they (these departments) had been through had proved that man's will is stronger than the evil schemes designed to destroy life.

July 17,1996, according to Mr 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, minister of information and culture. [sentence as received]

Sawt al-Jamahir had stopped transmitting in January 1991 after the US-led aggression.

Thanks to the efforts and the back up of various departments which allowed another "absentee" to be back.

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Israel: Netanyahu To 'Demand' Golan in Permanent Agreement

TA2507073196 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jul 96 p A6

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "Escalation in Lebanon can be two-sided, and terrorist pressure in Lebanon will not make Israel fold," Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will tell U.S. peace process coordinator Dennis Ross, who is expected today in Jerusalem following a visit to Damascus. The resumption of the negotiations with Syria will be the main issue on the agenda of the meeting with Ross.

The prime minister will reiterate his proposal to begin the talks with Syria with an attempt to attain a security arrangement in Lebanon under which Israel will withdraw from the security zone in exchange for appropriate security arrangements and the disarming of Hizballah. [passage omitted covered in referent items]

Netanyahu will propose to Ross that the talks with Syria be resumed on the basis of the invitation to the 1991 Madrid Conference. In his opinion, Israel is formally committed to only the Madrid formula, which calls for negotiations on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338. The prime minister rejects the Syrian stand demanding that Israel embrace the "land-for-peace" formula as the sole basis for the talks. Israeli sources noted that Netanyahu is not demanding the disarming of Hizballah and the termination of Lebanese terrorism as preconditions for negotiations. Netanyahu will further tell Ross that his government will demand the Golan in the permanent arrangement with Syria and that Israel will not give it back to the Syrians. [passage omitted]

Israel: Netanyahu's Plans for Permanent Arrangement Detailed

TA2507085796 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jul 96 p A3

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Netanyahu government's settlement policy will be based on the prime minister's ideas for a permanent arrangement with the Palestinians. The prime minister, who views settlements as an important means of establishing Israel's borders and preserving security, will expand settlements in areas he deems vital for the permanent arrangement.

Binyamin Netanyahu wants the Palestinian entity to be "less than a state" and without sovereignty. In his view, a sovereign state cannot be forced to accept restrictions and limitations preventing it from building an army or taking other steps that may endanger Israel. On the other hand, Netanyahu does not wish to perpetuate the military occupation of the Palestinians. Therefore, he is proposing a halfway solution.

Netanyahu's permanent arrangement formula consists of "hemming" in the Palestinians inside territorial boundaries — the area that will be handed over to the Palestinian entity — and functional boundaries that will consist of the powers and responsibilities the entity will receive.

Netanyahu would like to limit the area to be given to the Palestinians in order to prevent the emergence of an independent state in the territories, although he is willing to link up the existing autonomy enclaves in a way that will allow a direct link between Palestinian population centers in order to prevent a situation in which the residents are forced to fly by helicopter from city to city. The negotiations on the partition of West Bank lands are to be launched simultaneously with the discussions on the next stage of the Israeli redeployment in the West Bank which are due to start soon.

The prime minister discerns three types of West Bank territories: Arab population concentrations, Israeli settlement concentrations, and bare areas located primarily on the eastern slopes in Judaea and Samaria in the direction of the Jordan Rift Valley. He believes the Jewish and Palestinian population concentrations should be demarcated as blocs, while the bare areas should be divided between the two sides in a manner that will safeguard Israel's security interests.

The additional lands Israel will receive under the permanent arrangement will be defined as security areas and will be used also for the establishment of new settlements. Israel will retain crucial areas vital for security, such as parts of the mountain ridge and its surrounding areas, mountain ridge passes, and strategic installations, such as the Ba'al Hatzor [Tall 'Asur] mountain. He believes these areas are defendable, and their security is vital for the defense of the Coastal Plain, where large segments of Israel's population and infrastructure are centered.

The prime minister believes that in cases where an isolated Jewish settlement is situated inside an Arab population bloc or vice versa, a special arrangement, similar to the practice regarding the Gaza Strip's Netzarim, should be employed. He is against uprooting settlements under any circumstances, and he stresses "the Jews' right to settle anywhere in Eretz Yisra'el."

Netanyahu proposes limiting the Palestinian entity's powers in spheres in which it could overpower or threaten Israel. In his opinion, Israel should retain

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responsibility for cross-border issues, such as disease-transmitting mosquitoes. Control over water sources will also remain in Israeli hands. In every other sphere, the Palestinians will run their affairs without intervention.

The prime minister believes that, owing to the close ties between the two economies, the Palestinians will benefit from the prospering Israeli economy and Israeli industrial development will impact on the growth of the Palestinian economy.

Netanyahu attaches special significance to Hebron because of the city's Jewish settlement and the nature of the Cave of the Patriarchs. In his view, the security arrangements established by the Labor government in the interim agreement with the Palestinians should be amended. Netanyahu's proposal regarding Hebron will focus on territorial contiguity between the Jewish settlement in downtown Hebron and Qiryat Arba', which will remain under Israeli jurisdiction, including the Arab neighborhoods situated inside that bloc. There is as yet no decision on whether a road linking the two Hebron settlement blocs is to be built.

Israel: Netanyahu's Plans for Settlement Expansion Detailed

TA2507085996 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Jul 96 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben and Nadav Shragay]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is in favor of building settlements along the bypass roads in the West Bank. In his opinion, construction should evolve naturally along the bypass roads rather than on hilltops.

Bypass roads were paved in areas that are not inhabited by Arabs. Settlements built along them would link up existing settlement blocs and expand the contiguity between the settlements and Israeli territory within the Green Line.

In the next few days, Netanyahu will hold a debate on his government's settlement policy. The debate had been set for tomorrow's cabinet session but may be put off to next week. Proposals formulated by several ministers, with Netanyahu's guidelines and under Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave's coordination, will be presented in the debate.

The plan will be based on removing the restrictions and freeze on construction in the territories imposed by the Labor government. The initial decision will be to occupy some 1,500 empty apartments in the settlements and to continue building in existing settlements, but not to establish new ones. Government sources estimate that the number of Israelis in the territories will thus grow by some 50,000 people.

In addition, Netanyahu will order the completion of the bypass roads in the West Bank. Some 20 percent of these roads, which were planned after the interim accord, have yet to be paved.

In their meeting in Washington two weeks ago, Netanyahu told U.S. President Bill Clinton there were areas of agreement and disagreement between Israel and the United States on the settlement issue. The agreement applies to the expansion of existing settlements and the construction of bypass roads. The Americans are opposed to building new settlements and to confiscating land other than for building bypass roads. Netanyahu told Clinton: "When we reach the areas of disagreement, I will inform you in advance. We will not surprise you. We will not put trailers on hilltops." A senior political source said yesterday that the prime minister did not make any promises to Clinton or undertake to limit himself with regard to the settlements. In his talk with Clinton, the prime minister praised his predecessors for building the bypass roads, which he described as "one of the best things in the Oslo accords."

Netanyahu views the settlements as an important means for determining the borders between Israel and the Palestinian entity in the permanent arrangement. He is in favor of dividing empty areas in the West Bank between Israel and the Palestinians and believes that security areas remaining in Israel's hands could be used for settlement purposes.

The prime minister favors the concentration of settlements in blocs but thinks that special solutions should be found for isolated settlements which will remain in Palestinian areas.

The negotiations on the division of territory between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank will start soon, upon the opening of the deliberations on the next phase of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment, as stipulated in the interim accord.

Nadav Shragay adds: The prime minister will hold two meetings next week — one with the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza and another with heads of settlements in the Jordan Valley. The settlers are asking Netanyahu to cancel a series of "discriminatory decisions" passed by the Labor government with regard to the settlements, revive the construction and development momentum, and upgrade the classification of the settlements, giving them priority and benefits in terms of housing and education.

The settlers are also seeking the abolition of the committee that reviews special requests for construction in

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the territories so that the authority to approve settlements will revert to the Supreme Planning Committee for Judaea and Samaria and to the planning bodies in the settlements themselves.

Israel: 'High-Ranking Source' on Settlements, Hebron, Syria, Iran

TA2407172196 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] A permanent settlement with the Palestinians does not mean granting them an independent Palestinian state or sovereignty, but powers that enable them to run their own affairs and a reduction of Israeli interference in their daily lives without subjecting the State of Israel to danger. This was stated this evening by a high-ranking Israeli source who noted that the Oslo Accords did not place any restrictions on settlement plans in Judaea and Samaria.

Our political affairs correspondent Shlomo Ganor reports that the high-ranking source said that the agreements relating to redeployment in Hebron require modification and that the discussions with the Palestinian Authority in this regard will begin shortly.

The source added that in its talks with Dennis Ross, head of the U.S. peace team, Israel will propose a certain theory aimed at achieving peace with Syria. The source said the Syrian president is on the verge of being isolated politically on the international level. The source expressed the belief that if proof is obtained of Iran's involvement in last week's explosion of the U.S. passenger plane, this will be tantamount to the end of the ruling regime in Iran.

Israel: Netanyahu Gets 'Arafat's 'Unsatisfactory' Covenant Letter

TA2407183896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister's bureau has received a letter from 'Arafat on the Palestinian Covenant issue. The text of the letter is identical to that of 'Arafat's letter to the previous government. Shay Bazaq, the prime minister's media adviser, said this is not what the government meant when it demanded that the Palestinian Covenant be revoked.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz notes that the letter has failed to resolve the uncertainty over the question of whether the Palestinians have annulled Covenant clauses calling for the annihilation of Israel, and is therefore unsatisfactory as far as the government is concerned.

Israel: 'Senior Political Source' on Netanyahu Stands on Lebanon

TA2407183696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Studio talk between anchor Hayim Yavin and political correspondent Dan Scemama — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Scemama] The French foreign minister told Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu today that he was under the impression during his visit to Damascus that Syria is seeking peace. The prime minister told the visitor: Syria can show the Israeli people that it is seeking peace by putting an end to terrorism in south Lebanon.

[Reporting on Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 24 July, political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen adds: "In his meeting with Ross on Friday, Netanyahu will mention an Israeli threat: If Syria opts for freezing the negotiations and deliberately escalating the situation in Lebanon, its own interests may suffer. In other words: If al-Asad thinks he can pressure Israel in Lebanon, he will learn very soon that the escalation can be bilateral."]

[Yavin] No preconditions — these may be the key words Dennis Ross will hear when he arrives to meet with the prime minister at 1500 tomorrow.

[Scemama] Yes, he will hear the no preconditions phrase, as well as a lot of talk about Lebanon First, which is the prime minister's policy. The prime minister believes that Syria should make a step of goodwill toward Israel, to demonstrate its goodwill to the Israeli public. Senior elements in Jerusalem compare the situation with the talks with Egypt. They are saying: Look what happened with al-Sadat. He came to Jerusalem, and the Israeli people agreed to make peace with Egypt. Al-Sadat achieved much more by making one little move — coming to Jerusalem — than he had in all the wars and military operations. Syria should therefore stop the attacks in Lebanon, and if it does, it will be a sign that Syria truly desires peace.

[Yavin] The parallel with al-Sadat is not exactly valid, because al-Sadat received everything before coming to Jerusalem, but let us not dwell on that. Are there any new developments regarding Hizballah? Will it also be on the agenda of the talks with Dennis Ross tomorrow?

[Scemama] No, it will not be on tomorrow's agenda, but a senior political source says today that...

[Yavin, interrupting] It is the most senior source there is.

[Scemama] A senior source said in Jerusalem today that Hizballah and Iran are probably under enormous

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pressure in the wake of the TWA airliner explosion. The source said: When Nasrallah spoke of Ron Arad yesterday, he was not suddenly joining the Israeli army Veterans Club — this is a quote — and if the Iranians are feeling pressured as a result of the possible link between the TWA bombing — if it was one — and Iran, we may get Ron Arad. I hope he is right.

[Yavin] The prime minister will convene the settlement forum tomorrow. There are to be no new settlements, but existing ones will be fleshed out.

[Scemama] The prime minister will not surprise anyone by building new settlements or placing campers on hills in the territories. The previous government decided on certain restraints with regard to settlement expansion, but the same senior political source says that these restraints do not exist in the Oslo Accords or anywhere else, that settlements can be expanded, and apartments standing empty in settlements can probably be inhabited. The source added that such activity would take place with President Clinton's consent, even his understanding, as expressed in his conversation with Netanyahu in the United States two weeks ago. The Americans are not expected to oppose such activity.

[Yavin] When will the steering committee, agreed to in David Levi's meeting with 'Arafat, begin operation, and what will its composition be?

[Scemama] The committee will start operating very soon. Discussions with the Palestinians on Hebron will start within the next few days. There is one interesting thing, however. The source told us that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu was amazed to find out that army officers had been involved in political moves, that they had offered what amounted to political advice, that they had conducted political negotiations. The prime minister plans to remove the army officers from the political negotiations, because it is a skewed practice. Although this practice is no fault of theirs, they will not be involved in future negotiations.

[Yavin] Perhaps they will be through the National Security Council. Thank you very much, Dan Scemama.

Israel: French Foreign Minister Invites Netanyahu, Levi to France

LD2407162696 Paris LCI Television in French 1500 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel must honor its commitments to the Palestinians, notably in Hebron — [French Foreign Minister] Herve de Charette has said today — and then Jerusalem. During a tour of the Middle East, the French foreign minister met his Israeli counterpart David Levi, and then Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, as well as President Ezer Weizman. The French minister said — I quote — that the wish for peace is no less today than yesterday in Israel, and he invited his foreign affairs counterpart to come to Paris in September, as well as Mr. Netanyahu; but the date of this visit has not been specified.

Israel: Levi on Seeking al-Shar' Meeting, No Golan Precondition

TA2407184196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister David Levi disclosed today that he is trying to arrange a meeting with his Syrian counterpart. The foreign minister said that Israeli control over all of the Golan Heights would not be a precondition for the negotiations. Levi also defended himself against criticism for meeting with Palestinian Authority [PA] head Yasir 'Arafat yesterday. David Ze'ev reports:

[Ze'ev] Foreign Minister David Levi was responding to a reporter's question about the message to the Syrians he relayed yesterday through PA head Yasir 'Arafat. The Israeli foreign minister said the message was primarily that Damascus must rethink its approach to the peace process. If Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' is interested, and if peace is important to his country, Levi said, he is prepared to meet with his Syrian counterpart in any place at any time. Levi's comments were made at a joint Jerusalem news conference with visiting French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who offered to mediate.

[Begin de Charette recording] We'll work personally very hard to make possible the renewal of the discussions between Israel and Syria. [end recording]

In the Knesset, in response to a motion for the agenda, Foreign Minister Levi said there is still no crack in the Syrian dictate, as he put it, that Israel first agree to withdraw from all of the Golan Heights as a precondition to negotiations. On the other hand, Levi said, it would be illogical for anyone to expect Israel to receive Syrian recognition of full Israeli control over the Heights before negotiations begin, and for Israel to make that a precondition.

Levi also responded to Likud criticism over meeting PA head 'Arafat yesterday back at the news conference with the French foreign minister. Levi said he went to the meeting as a representative of a democratically elected government and the prime minister. The Israeli foreign minister challenged his critics, saying if anyone thinks the right way to run the country is to sit and do nothing, he will have no answers. If anyone has new alternative, let him present it.

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Israel: Right-Wing Leaders Oppose Levi-'Arafat Meeting

TA2407182296 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 p 4

[Report by Tzvi Singer]

[FBIS Translated Text] "I only hope we will not have to lie in the streets again, demonstrating against the government of Netanyahu as we did against the Labor-Meretz government, but I am afraid we will not have a choice." These remarks were made yesterday by Moshe Feiglin, one of the Zo Artzenu Movement leaders in reaction to the Levi-'Arafat meeting.

The meeting provoked harsh reactions from right-wing activists. Feiglin, who orchestrated the road-blocking demonstrations during the term of the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin against the Oslo agreements, added: "The Levi-'Arafat meeting is very grave. Netanyahu's government is falling into the Oslo trap and following the disastrous notion that the Labor government followed. We do not want to come out against Netanyahu's government. We also know that this time, the majority will not be with us. I hope we do not have to resume our struggle."

Tzvi Katzover, Qiryat Arba' Council head, also expressed his concern over the meeting: "I am disappointed. The way things appear now, Netanyahu's government is following the failed policy of the Labor government. I have a bad feeling that this government is about to make big mistakes. We feared that much, but our hands are tied. Regrettably, if this government decides to follow the road to false peace, it will encounter almost no opposition."

Pinhas Walerstein, chairman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, was more moderate: "There is government continuity and, in any event, the political echelons are committed to the agreement. I hope that David Levi will honestly represent our demands regarding the fulfillment of the agreement. I hope he drew 'Arafat's attention to the daily violations of the agreement by the Palestinians. I am definitely concerned about the Hebron issue. Blessed is the Jew who always worries. Still, I trust this government."

Israel: Levi-'Arafat Meeting Seen as 'Opening Shot' for Unity Government

TA2407180296 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 p 3

[Commentary by Hemi Shalev: "The Oslo Process Is Alive and Well"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister David Levi was tense and uptight when he entered the meeting with Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat yesterday, but came out pleased and smiling. Levi was tasked with the tough and delicate mission of establishing a high-level contact with the man who until a few days ago his party considered an arch terrorist and a murderer. Levi performed the task with what seems to be an impressive success.

The meeting at the Erez crossing completes a first round of meetings between the new Israeli government and the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinians. The conclusion from the meetings is that the sky did not come tumbling down. Israel's neighbors will be glad to go on doing business as usual, if only the Likud allows it.

The Levi-'Arafat meeting was meant to succeed. It did not engage in the minute details of the disagreements between the parties. 'Arafat, who is not without charm, was at his best yesterday. He took precaution not to embarrass his Israeli guest by publicly reiterating his final goals — establishing a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. He promised Levi that he would meticulously observe the Oslo agreements, convincing him he is candid. The two-hour meeting fulfilled every expectation of it, and sent a message to the world and the region: The Oslo process is alive and well, despite the change of guard in Israel.

At the same time, Levi placed himself at the position of 'Arafat's main interlocutor in the Israeli government. With this in mind, it was interesting to observe the difference between the harsh and suspicious remarks Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu made at the Knesset yesterday and the generous and optimistic words Levi used at the Erez checkpoint at the very same time. This "job distribution" is reminiscent of the Rabin-Peres moves. For a long time, the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin was hesitant and suspicious of 'Arafat and the Oslo agreements, while former Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was enthusiastic and positive toward them. Peres too has always had "positive talks" with 'Arafat.

The meeting also marks the beginning of the internal debate by the Israeli right about the reality that Rabin and Peres cooked for them. Although the Israeli political

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arena was quiet yesterday, there is broad and persistent opposition in the cabinet and the Knesset to Netanyahu's moves and agreement to go on with the Oslo Accords as if nothing has happened. In this respect, it may well be that yesterday's meeting was the opening shot of a long process, at the end of which the current coalition will break down and a national unity government will be formed. 'Arafat may have failed in winning the elections for Peres, but he is still hard at work to get him appointed foreign minister and deputy prime minister.

Israel: Paper Says Success of 'Arafat-Levi Meeting Lies in Follow-Up

TA2407114496 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 24 Jul 96 p 6

[Editorial: "A Positive Meeting"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The very fact that a meeting took place yesterday between Foreign Minister David Levi and Palestinian Authority [PA] head Yasir 'Arafat is a positive accomplishment, in that it publicly indicates Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government realizes it cannot simply pretend 'Arafat and the authority he presides over do not exist.

Whether the meeting can be called the defining moment in the new government's foreign policy will depend on how it is followed up and whether it will lead to further high-level dialogue and an honest assessment by both parties as to the best way to proceed in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

It appears that the Arab world's immediate shock following Netanyahu's election victory, and the attendant near-hysterical reactions it caused, is dissipating, and this is a welcome development. The government wisely initiated a series of contacts with the main players in the Israeli-Arab dialogue, which included the prime minister's trip to Egypt last week and his adviser Dore Gold's visit to the Gulf states. The net effect has been a strengthening of Israel's diplomatic standing in the face of Syria's attempts at reviving the old Arab rejectionist front. Yesterday's meeting, coming just prior to an 'Arafat visit to Damascus, is in line with this strategic and diplomatic effort and is a further step in the Arab world's coming to terms with the new style and emphases of the Netanyahu government.

But meetings alone are not sufficient — they must lead to true dialogue and progress. The government's insistence on first ensuring that previous agreements are met before further agreements are concluded can form the basis for its initial dialogue with the Palestinians. But this will work only if both sides use the issue of correcting violations in a constructive and confidence-building manner, rather than as a tool for mutual recrimination and avoidance of commitments. Israel has recently taken steps to fulfill commitments it had been delaying, such as the release of female prisoners and the easing of the closure.

A similar effort on the part of the Palestinian Authority would go a long way toward clearing the currently strained relations between the PA and Israel. 'Arafat yesterday pledged to halt PA diplomatic activity in Jerusalem, end PA police work in Israel's capital, and provide information as to the whereabouts of the grave of murdered IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier Ilan Sa'adon. He also promised to write a letter to Netanyahu confirming the abolition of those clauses in the Palestinian Covenant which call for Israel's destruction. These promises had better not be empty ones.

Progress on the Israeli-Palestinian track will also depend on further contacts, held regularly and at various levels, including an eventual Netanyahu-'Arafat summit. Since the new government took office, the lack of communication between the two sides has been disappointing. The Israeli-Palestinian liaison committees, established by the Oslo agreements, have been meeting infrequently and only at the lowest levels. 'Arafat's refusal to meet Gold last week was not only insulting, but counterproductive. The time has come for both the PA and Israel to establish permanent high-level teams, whose task will be to maintain contact and ensure the more publicized ministerial-level summits actually lead somewhere.

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Jordan: Dennis Ross Arrives in Amman; Makes Statement on Tour

JN2407202496 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video from the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Dennis Ross arrived in Amman this evening as part of his current trip in the region.

Ross told the News at Ten that his visit aims at furthering consultations to revive Middle East peace talks.

[Begin Ross recording] In the aftermath of Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to Washington, the president and the secretary wanted me to come out and engage in a number of briefings in the region and engage also with consultations with many of the regional leaders. I began the tour actually in London where I was able to see His Majesty King Husayn, and we had really excellent talks and discussed where things were, and considered how best to promote the peace process.

I also had the opportunity in London to see Sultan Qabus of Oman, especially in his capacity where they chair, represent the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] at this stage. And today I came and visited President al-Asad in Syria, where we had a chance to have extensive talks which were, I think, useful and serious. I conveyed a message from President Clinton about our seriousness in terms of pursuing the peace process. I heard from President al-Asad that Syria is committed to pursuing the peace process and maintains that commitment.

I am here in Jordan now and will have the chance to follow up on some of the discussions that I have had so far, do a little bit of briefing, again do some consulting, and also address our bilateral issues between the United States and Jordan. [end recording]

Jordan: De Charette's Visit, French Role in Peace Process Viewed

JN2407133796 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 29

[Editorial: "De Charette's Visit and the French Role"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The French foreign minister's visit to Jordan and his extensive talks with His Highness Prince Hasan and the prime minister show the importance Jordan attaches to the European role, and particularly the French role, in advancing the peace process and strengthening it to enable it to surmount the obstacles that it faces or will face in the future. This visit also shows the importance France attaches to Jordan's effective and efficient role in shaping the region's future on grounds of agreement, not disagreement; on dialogue as an alternative to war; and based on the commitment by all the parties to the Madrid terms of reference, which are based on the land-for-peace formula.

Jordan views the positive French stand with great appreciation and respect. France is expected to play a distinguished and effective role in bringing the views of all the parties to the peace process closer together and finding appropriate grounds for the resumption of negotiations, particularly on the Syrian track, given the special relations between Paris and both Damascus and Tel Aviv and the French understanding of the nature of the region due to France' deep-rooted relations with it. In addition, France is a Mediterranean littoral state, something that increases cultural cooperation and common concepts between France and the region's states.

The French minister's talks covered the special relations between Jordan and France. Moreover, the announcement on European financial aid to our country to help it overcome its difficult economic circumstances is an expression of appreciation for Jordan's special role in shaping the region's future, which is based on a just and comprehensive peace that enables its sons to build their secure future.

We welcome de Charette's visit to our country and look for a French role in achieving the aspired peace in the region, in contributing to building its future, and in accelerating development, taking into consideration the size of French influence on the two sides of the peace equation, the French cultural and economic interests in the region, and the role it seeks to play in the world.

Jordan: SANA Cites Jordanian Ambassador on Israeli Relations

JN2407172096 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1620 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 24 Jul (SANA) — 'Umar al- Rifa'i, Jordanian ambassador to Israel, expressed his country's hope that comprehensive peace will be achieved in the Middle East. Israeli radio monitored here today said al-Rifa'i told Israeli correspondents that all articles of the Wadi al-'Arabah treaty will be implemented, pointing out that no change in Israel will affect relations between Jordan and Israel.

Al-Rifa'i stressed the need to reach a solution to the Palestine question. He expressed satisfaction with the results of the meeting held yesterday between Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian limited self-rule authority, and David Levi, Israeli foreign minister. Al-Rifa'i characterized the upcoming visit of Israeli Prime

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Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to Jordan as important, saying it will provide an opportunity for talks between Netanyahu and Jordanian officials on continuing the peace process in the region.

Jordan: Prime Minister Says Bread Subsidy Decision Irreversible

JN2507100096 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25-26 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Tariq al-Mumani, "special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday decided to devote its regular session Sunday, for discussions on the government's policy towards bread subsidies, and Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti declared his government would not go back on its plans in this regard.

The House speaker, Sa'd Hayil al-Surur, called for the special session after 41 of the 80-member House moved a motion urging the government to abandon its plan for "rechanneling" of the subsidy.

Mr. al-Kabariti said during the session that Parliament enjoyed wider powers and can hold the government to account for its performance but added: "I only exercise the authority invested in me by the Constitution. What the government is going in the case of the bread fails under its authority. In my view (the rechanneling of the bread subsidy) is in the interest of the nation and the Jordanian citizens."

"We do not intend to increase the burdens on the citizens but we can always reassess the system (of compensation) with a view to amending it should we find any faults."

Asked what his government would do in case Parliament decided to hold a vote-of-confidence session, Mr. al-Kabariti said: "I bear the full responsibility according to the Constitution. I am not afraid of a vote-of-confidence session as long as I am shouldering my responsibility and duty."

According to the Constitution the House can only hold a vote-of-confidence session during its regular session that starts in December.

"I do not want to prove myself more patriotic than any other member of Parliament, but I want to point out that we are facing an extremely difficult situation and we cannot remain silent, and we have found no better alternative for the new system," added Mr. al-Kabariti.

"We should not risk losing all that we have achieved in the past years or go back on economic reforms for which we have been appreciated by the world community."

"No government would like to lose its popularity but the national interest should top any other consideration," added Mr. al-Kabariti.

Mr. al-Kabariti also announced that the government will very soon embark on an austerity and rationalisation programme.

"We will announce plans for the various ministries in this concern," he said.

During the House regular session opposition deputies demanded that the House reject government-proposed laws on the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY and the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation claiming that the laws would pave the ground for their privatisation.

Islamist Deputy Hammam Sa'id said: "The state media should remain under full state control." The new laws, he said, would open the way for the creation of private stations, with dangerous consequences to the nation.

Another deputy Sulayman Sa'id told the House that private radio stations would have serious consequences on the country.

Their views were countered by Information Minister Marwan al-Mua'shshir who stressed that at the initial stage there would be no privatisation of these services and "we will allow the private sector to be represented on the boards of these institutions."

The two deputies' requests were rejected by the House when they were put to the vote and the House subsequently referred the draft laws to its committees to study them.

Jordan: Minister Urges Citizen Involvement in Media Affairs

JN2507070196 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video; from the "News at Ten"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The House of Representatives today discussed the bread price issue and the government's moves to rechannel its subsidy. The house set 4 August for a further debate on the issue. The debate was requested by 41 MP's.

Furthermore, the house referred to two of its committees, and after a lengthy discussion, two draft laws involving restructuring of the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation and the news agency, PETRA.

Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir explained to the House the philosophy underlying the two plans, saying they aim to open up the opportunity to other

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opinions to be expressed on the radio and television. He said since Jordan has a multiparty system with partisan newspapers that allow for opinions to be expressed, then he doesn't see why the radio and television should not be able to allow others' opinions to be expressed through their channels.

Mr. al-Mu'ashshir said the draft laws do not involve privatization in the first phase, but involvement of citizens in the running of the affairs of the radio, television, and the news agency. [video shows House of Representatives in session, al- Mu'ashshir addressing representatives]

Jordan: Political Party Coalition Leader Interviewed

JN2507110496 Amman THE STAR in English 25-31 Jul 96 p 3

["Excerpts" of interview with Mijhim al-Khurayshah, general secretary of the Jordanian National Coalition Party and president of the Jordanian National Front coalition, by correspondent Ra'id al- Abid; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Al-Abid] Are you pushing towards political integration between the four parties [Jordanian National Coalition Party, al-Watan, al-Yaqadha, Progress and Justice parties]?

[Al-Khurayshah] We are making every effort to achieve the final goal, the unity of these parties under the present Jordanian National Front. It is true that the front was founded three years ago, however, early this year we substantially reviewed its charter, and we assigned special committees for that purpose. One of these committees is organizational which aims at consolidating the agendas of the parties in one program. This step will be the basis for complete integration.

We are seeking to hold a general meeting for all members of the four parties. Probably by the end of this year we will reach the integration stage.

We definitely believe in the necessity to achieve unity, which will be a step to a further goal: unity of all centrist parties in the country.

[Al-Abid] So you are aiming at widening the membership of the front...

[Al-Khurayshah] There are extensive efforts. We want to unite six parties within the front, four of which are already involved, and we hope to add al-Wahdawiyyin and al-Jamahir parties. We are also holding talks with al-Wa'd and al-'Ahd parties, we hope to succeed in uniting them in one centrist and moderate party, hopefully by the end of this year, too.

[Al-Abid] The front released a strongly-worded statement opposing the government's plan to hike the prices of bread. The tone of the statement was almost similar to that of the opposition parties. Is this true regarding the bread issue at least?

[Al-Khurayshah] National issues are discussed in the higher leadership of the front and its executive committee. We are parties which are build on programs and not on ideologies.

Accordingly, our goal is people's concerns. Our goal is to bring the massage of the people across to the government in a correct way.

Concerning the issue of bread, we released a statement as you mentioned. But till now we view the stand of the government as convincing, taking the fact that the prices of bread are over subsidized. Taking into consideration that our country is a non grain producer, we are also not an oil producer country.

In Syria for instance, the price of a kilogram of bread is between 250-300 fils (Jordanian currency), the gasoline in Syria is much more expensive than here, despite the fact that Syria is an oil-producer country.

Our stand towards the government is based on the logic of numbers and facts about the situation of the country.

We hope that the increase of bread prices will come about gradually, not through a rapid jump. A triple increase, as it is the intention, would be very serious. However, we feel comfortable as long as the government is working on a mechanism to support the poor.

The opposition parties have their own point of view, which we respect; we may agree with them and we may not. At the same time we agree with the government if we find its position convincing, and vice versa.

We take into our consideration the country's economic situation, the IMF and the World Bank, and the dinar exchange rate. We have to take all the internal and external factors when we discuss the reasons behind the government's intention to increase prices, particularly bread.

We disagree with the opposition in raising the slogan "We protest", till we find alternatives.

[Al-Abid] Do you think that the al-Kabariti government is facing serious economic and political crises?

[Al-Khurayshah] Since the establishment of Jordan. I believe that governments have existed within the economic and political situation of the country that exists at the time.

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These crises are not a result of the qualified or unqualified ministerial team, but it is the local, regional and international conditions which impose their consequences on the Kingdom. So it has been hard for any government to deal with these factors without facing difficulties.

Taking into consideration the economic situation of Jordan and the peace treaty with Israel, don't forget the no peace, no war situation that existed before. The prerequisites of that era, the economic and military sides, created an extraordinary conditions which made Jordan suffer.

The recent government is not different from the previous ones. It is a continuation of successive governments. This government is distinguished from others, as it lives in the peace era and is facing a very difficult economic situation. I believe the government is bravely confronting these difficulties, through bold decisions, something the previous government could not do.

[Al-Abid] In the light of the radical stands of the Israeli Prime Minister Binaymin Netanyahu, how do you see the future of the peace process?

[Al-Khurayshah] There is no doubt that the peace process is facing a real crisis due to the last Israeli election which brought the radical religious parties to power.

This fact has shaken Israeli credibility towards peace, particularly Netanyahu's 'Nos' concerning Jerusalem, refugees, the Palestinian state, Golan Heights... These issues are substantial; peace will not last without solving them.

We hope that this policy of 'Nos' will be limited to the electoral slogans and the Israeli government will overcome such policies.

The peace treaties which were signed are an international obligation. The world insists on the continuation of the pace process.

The Arab countries did their best in their last summit in Cairo, when they agreed on the option of peace as a strategic goal for the Arabs, so Israel, too, should take peace as a strategic choice for the future, not security.

[Al-Abid] In this regard how do you view the official stand?

[Al-Khurayshah] I believe that the Jordanian position is very balanced and flexible which is necessary in this stage: We should not act nervously till we see what exactly the Israeli government wants. We feel there are improvements in the Israeli stands during the visit of Netanyahu to Cairo and particularly the meeting between Israeli foreign minister David Levi with Yasir 'Arafat; such a meeting was rejected during the Israeli election campaign.

Peace should be an Israeli quest before it is an Arab one, because Israel should be the one who seeks peace.

[Al-Abid] How do you fell about some articles which undermine national unity of the country? Do you think that democracy gives anybody the right to talk about such issues?

[Al-Khurayshah] All the writings should be responsible; democracy, the freedom of the press and that of expression are holy rights preserved by the Constitution. These rights should be practiced within the principles of the country, we believe the country's interest come first. Anybody who wishes to express his point of view must put the country's interests first.

National unity is holy, whoever tries to break through this redline must be reminded that national unity is the cause of citizens.

Freedom means responsibility which is based on the right of the country as prior to the right of persons, and the right of citizens as prior to the right of individuals.

There are some who violate national unity and they have to be stopped.

[Al-Abid] How do you evaluate the performance of the Parliament in the general issues which were discussed under its dome?

[Al-Khurayshah] I hoped to see a better performance for Parliament. No doubt that the deputies gave all they had, and offered many services, but our hope were bigger than their performance.

Jordan: Prosecutor Jails AKHBAR AL-'USBU' Editor Over Articles

JN2507094896 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25-26 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Rana al-Husayni, "special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman — A weekly tabloid editor Wednesday was ordered jailed by the prosecutor general for 15 days on charges of inaccuracy in reporting and undermining national unity.

Tawfiq Kiwan, 62, editor of AKHBAR AL-'USBU' (Weekly News) was called to Prosecutor General Jamal Zu'bi's office for questioning Monday after Muhammad Amin, Director of the Press and Publications Department filed a complaint about several articles that were published in the newspaper on Nov. 30, 1995, Ziad Khasawnih, the attorney defending Mr. Kiwan said.

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"On Wednesday the prosecutor general decided to apprehend my client," Mr. Khasawnih told the JORDAN TIMES.

According to Mr. Khasawnih, Mr. Zu'bi is pressing several charges in connection with three articles published in November issues of the weekly.

One article was entitled "A secret dialogue between the American administration and the Jordanian opposition parties."

Another news item was about an armed gang which allegedly attacked and robbed a bank.

A third brief news item charged that some secret agents from neighbouring countries arrived in the Kingdom to obtain Jordanian passports.

Charges pressed against the weekly editor, according to Mr. Khasawnih, include overlooking objectivity and honesty in reporting on news, publishing inaccurate news, and threatening the country's security.

Mr. Kasawnih said that he will request bail for Mr. Kiwan today.

Mr. Kiwan was the fourth editor of a newspaper to be ordered to stand trial at the Court of First Instance by Prosecutor General Jamal Zu'bi in the past two weeks.

On Tuesday, judicial sources said that Jihad al-Mumani, editor of the weekly tabloid SHIHAN, will be expected to appear in court on charges of undermining national unity, inciting people to commit crimes and fuelling bigotry.

On July 21, Nasir Khammash, editor of the weekly tabloid SAWT AL- MARA' (the voice of woman) was ordered held by Mr. Zu'bi on similar charges. Sources told the Jordan Times Tuesday that Mr. Khammash was expected to be released on bail Wednesday.

The same sources on Wednesday said his release is expected today.

Ten days earlier, editor of another weekly tabloid name al- Haqiqah (the truth) was detained for four days on similar charges.

Government sources had said that the recent arrests are part of a government campaign against violators of the Press and Publications Law, prompted by a parliament call last week urging the authorities and the media to take measures to put an end to writings that harm national unity and Arab Islamic values.

His Majesty King Husayn responded to the parliament's call by criticising some writers who attempt to undermine national unity.

Meanwhile the Jordanian Press Association issued a statement Wednesday expressing their concern over what they see as a recent rash of arrests of journalists and editors. They asked the government that before authorities seek to apprehend a member of the press that a member of the JPA Council be present during investigations.

Jordan: SAWT AL-MARA' Editor Released on Bail

JN2507094796 Amman THE STAR in English 25-31 Jul 96 p 2

[From the "Jordan Week" column by Marwan al-Asmar]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [passage omitted] Nasir al-Khammash, chief editor of SAWT AL-MARA' weekly, was released on bail yesterday, Wednesday as a result of intervention from the Jordan Press Association (JPA). The editor was taken into custody last Saturday after he published an article in his newspaper describing the Raghadan Bus Station as becoming a center for "drugs and prostitution." As a result, the Press and Publication Dept. filed a complaint to the public prosecutor. The article was described as inaccurate that tarnished the reputation of public facilities in Jordan. Previous request to grant bail to Mr. al-Khammash was refused, but it seems that the last attempt worked. The new president of the JPA who engineered the release said "we are against the arrest of any journalist." The arrest of al-Khammash has created a bit of a problem. His case was taken up by Reporters Sans Frontieres, the Paris-based international organization concerned with the protection of the press. It is said that they appealed to HM King Husayn for his release.

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Lebanon: Peace Process Continuing Despite Netanyahu Rhetoric

MM2407154396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 15

[Article by Khayrallah Khayrallah: "Why Is the Process Continuing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday's meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi is only one of many signs that the peace process is continuing despite Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's hard-line positions. The 'Arafat-Levi meeting means that it is not possible to dismiss the Palestinian National Authority's president, and that talk of returning to a pre-Oslo situation is unrealistic.

The return to the region of Dennis Ross, the U.S. peace process coordinator, can be seen as yet another indication that the U.S. Administration has not given up on bringing Syria back to the negotiating table, even though this was intended as a face-saving device before next November's U.S. elections. If Dennis Ross succeeds in his mission, it would then be possible to hold one or two sessions of Syrian-Israeli negotiations before the election date.

However, what is more important is what is happening now on the Lebanese-Israeli track. What was impossible some months ago is now possible. Hizballah and Israel exchanged bodies while quiet reigned in southern Lebanon, as though last April's escalation in the region had served its purpose. Not only was there an exchange of bodies, but it also looked as though there is a genuine intention among all sides to make the "April understanding" a viable understanding which would reinforce Lebanon's ability to wait during the crucial stage that the region is going through. What is certain is that Syria played a major part in supporting the exchange of prisoners and bodies, and in making great efforts for the return of quiet to south Lebanon. Through the April understanding, it had its first contact with Netanyahu's Administration, whose adviser Dore Gold met with Walid al-Mu'allim, Syria's ambassador to Washington, within the context of the meetings that the parties to the understanding held in the U.S. capital.

In this context, what is interesting is the fact that Damascus has started to review its plans in many areas, since it will be receiving Yasir 'Arafat, whom it would have preferred not to receive after Abu-'Ammar failed, after signing the Oslo agreement in August 1993, to convince it that the agreement serves any purpose. It will also be receiving King Husayn, who was quick to support the Oslo agreement when it was announced three years ago, apparently after Jordan said it had some reservations about it. Furthermore, the king realized that the Oslo agreement paved the way for broadening the peace and reaching a Jordanian-Israeli agreement which protected Jordan from the problems of internal Israeli changes and made it impervious to their consequences.

There are perhaps other signs which all point in the same direction, namely the continuation of the peace process, starting with President Husni Mubarak's positive statements after receiving the new Israeli prime minister, and after the visit of Netanyahu's adviser to both Qatar and Oman, which showed that the international will represented by the U.S. desire not to abandon the peace process, and the European — particularly French and even German — enthusiasm for this process are more powerful than Netanyahu's no's, despite the fact that his government includes Ari'el Sharon and Refa'el Eytan.

Lebanon: Amal Group Claims Attack Against 'Enemy' Patrol

NC2407082496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A resistance group attacked a patrol of occupation troops between 'Adshit al-Qusayr and al-Qantarah last night. The Amal Movement claimed responsibility for the operation, adding that an approximately 15-minute clash ensued with an enemy patrol during which Israeli helicopters intervened to help the patrol. Members of the patrol were either killed or wounded, according to Amal.

Lebanon: IDF Armored Forces, Helicopters Fire on Amal Group

TA2407170396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Beirut-based Amal organization says that two of its men were wounded in a shooting incident with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that an IDF unit detected suspicious movement in the eastern sector of south Lebanon's security zone last night. IDF armored forces and helicopters opened fire at what was later thought to have been a squad that fled. Today the Amal organization announced in Beirut that two of its men had been injured by the gunfire. A spokesman in Beirut said that the men managed to leave the security zone.

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Syria: Dennis Ross Delivers Clinton Message on Peace to al-Asad

JN2407180296 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace process, in al-Qardahah at 1330 [1030 GMT] today.

Attending the meeting were Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Walid al-Mu'allim, Syria's ambassador in Washington; Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus; and Mark Parris, President Bill Clinton's adviser for Middle East Affairs and member of the U.S. National Security Council.

Dennis Ross delivered a message to the president from U.S. President Bill Clinton on the peace process. The participants in the meeting discussed the situation in the region and the recent developments that negatively affected the peace process. Ross presented the U.S. Administration's view and said that it is eager to activate the peace process in accordance with the agreed-upon principles, Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the land-for-peace principle.

President al-Asad stressed Syria's principled stand toward the issue of a just and comprehensive peace, as well as Syria's continued commitment to the peace process and to making efforts to make this process achieve its objective of a just and comprehensive peace. [video of al-Asad, Ross, and other attendees in session)

Syria: Radio Welcomes French Peace Efforts

JN2407153796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Everyone who visits Syria and gets to know its position on the peace process becomes more convinced that Syria is eager to achieve a just and comprehensive peace and that for Syria peace is a strategic option. Syria's adherence to peace stems from its adherence to the principles and foundations formulated by international legitimacy and its resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette asserted this yesterday. In addition, U.S. President Bill Clinton said this after his visit to Damascus and his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad. European, Russian, and other officials said the same thing.

On the other hand, everyone who visits Israel and listens to statements by its officials becomes more convinced that Israel does not want a just and comprehensive peace, based on international legitimacy. Syria's firm position on peace and its foundations has been the basis of a unified Arab and international stand toward this sensitive issue that affects the security and interests of all parties. Syria knows the importance of peace and is aware of the difficulties and obstacles in its way. Syria welcomes any international effort that can pave the way for the peace process to continue. To keep the peace process on track, the United States—a superpower and a major sponsor of the peace process—must play its real role to assert the credibility of its initiative and its commitment to the land-for-peace principle and the UN resolutions, on which the Madrid conference was based. President Clinton's administration has repeatedly emphasized its commitment to the role of a full partner and honest broker in implementing the land-for-peace principle and guaranteeing the rights and security of all parties in accordance with international resolutions.

The Arabs made their position very clear at the Cairo summit and during the meetings that followed it. This has reflected positively on the international position. Syria welcomes an active French and European role and calls on the brother Arabs to activate this role by intensifying contacts and firmly adhering to the Cairo summit resolutions, in accordance with the requirements of the peace process. At the same time, Arabs should continue to bolster Arab solidarity and mobilize their capabilities to assert Arab rights, achieve justice, and apply international legitimacy to everyone.

The world supports just and comprehensive peace, international legitimacy, and the land-for-peace principle. The world will also support the liberation of the occupied Arab territories and stopping settlement if the Arabs insist on this and adhere to their rights and demands. An identical and solid Arab and international position will deter Israeli extremism and convince Israel that it cannot defy the international family and pursue its aggressive policy that threatens world peace and security.

Syria: Netanyahu's Peace Process Approach Termed 'Provocative'

JN2507083296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 25 Jul 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH discusses the regional peace process, which is being obstructed by Binyamin Netanyahu's government. The paper warns that this government may resort to deception and superficial flexibility and may also offer more hollow words on peace without any substance.

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The paper says: Observers noticed that after the Arab summit in Cairo, Netanyahu became anxious and was not as comfortable as he was before the summit. The cohesive Arab position produced by the summit paved the way for Russian, French, and European positions in support of Arab rights and the principles of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

AL-BA'TH adds: The positions produced at the Florence, Lyon, Luxembourg, and other summits intensified the international isolation against Netanyahu's government. Therefore, this government sought to strike at the basic link that gave rise to all these positions — the link of the cohesive Arab position. Any defect in this link will produce defects in the other positions. The Europeans and non-Europeans cannot be more Arab than the Arabs themselves.

The paper adds: It is dangerous to show any laxity in implementing the resolutions of Cairo summit or to allow any noncompliance with these resolutions. It is a crucial national duty for all Arab states to persistently seek to develop and improve on these resolutions. Since Europe and Russia are worried about any Arab collapse in the face of Netanyahu's government, the Arabs should join ranks and defend their rights, territory, and future.

AL-BA'TH says: The Arabs, particularly Syria, are advocates of peace. This, however, does not mean that they will accept the conditions and terms Israel is setting under the name of peace. What Netanyahu's government is offering remains unchanged — peace for peace and security in exchange for peace. This cannot be accepted by Syria or any Arab party under any circumstance.

AL-BA'TH concludes: Syria, which cooperated with the United States and the other international parties to ensure the success of the peace process, appreciates the enthusiasm demonstrated by all these parties to continue the peace process. However, it will not agree to negotiations for the sake of negotiations, without any tangible results. Syria is completely convinced that it is useless to resume the talks unless they are based on systematic and practical foundations; namely, peace and the resolutions of international legitimacy.

In a commentary, AL-THAWRAH says that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's policy is provocative and cannot revive hopes of achieving peace in the region.

The paper says the delegations that have recently visited Syria, particularly the French and U.S. delegations, must have arrived at the conclusion that Syria is still committed to the peace process and is prepared to accept total peace in exchange for total withdrawal.

AL-THAWRAH says: These delegations, which were also informed of the Israeli position, must have realized the great gap that separates the Syrian and Israeli positions. They must have also realized the great difference between a party that respects the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principles of justice and right and the party that publicly exercises the law of the jungle, shows disdain to the will of international community, and publicly states its insistence to use force and subjugate others and force them to accept its unfair conditions and dictates.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Netanyahu's provocative policy cannot revive the hopes for peace. Instead, this policy has expressed itself in a flagrant way by rejecting any withdrawal from the Golan Heights and by insisting on building settlements and devouring Jerusalem.

AL-THAWRAH says: Such a policy provides the world community with a great deal of evidence to confirm that Israel is belittling the opportunity to achieve peace and that it alone will be responsible for the consequences of this inaction, which will eventually lead to the collapse of the peace process and open the prospect for tension and explosion.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: If all international efforts now seek to provide the minimum requirements to ensure the continuation of the peace process, then the simple logic stipulates that these efforts must concentrate on Israel to persuade it to change its intransigent positions. Without changing these positions, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to see any breakthrough in the peace process in the near future.

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India

India: Rao Interviewed on Current Events

BK2407155796 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 24 Jul 96 p 11

["Excerpts" of interview with P.V. Narasimha Rao, Congress Party president, with Subhash Kirpekar, THE TIMES OF INDIA correspondent, on 23 July; place not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Kirpekar] What are your plans for rebuilding and rejuvenating the Congress Party? How long will the immediate, short-term and long-term plans take to materialise? What strategy would you adopt to win back sections of society alienated from the Congress?

[Rao] It is four years since organisational elections were held. They are due this year and enrolment of membership is on. I think the non-legislative and non-governmental programme of the Congress has not received due attention for a long time. That is why our mass contact has become sketchy and irregular.

For example, I had appointed a person as chairman of the Khadi Commission and given the Commission a corpus of Rs [rupees] 1000 crore. Khadi is a symbol of our freedom struggle and in the past bound everyone together. But this gentleman left the post to become an MP. The orientation is towards power. They do not want to go to the villages.

The composition of the Congress also needs to be rebuilt, so as to reflect the entire social pyramid and its geographical spread more realistically. When this is done, well-conceived socioeconomic programmes can be formulated and implemented, apart from those of the government, central and state.

The tendency to push through all programmes into governmental channels, resulting in party activists feeling unutilised, should now give rise to a plethora of programmes to be taken up exclusively by the party.

Apart from the programmes, there was a deep psychological attachment of the people in general, whether Congress members or not, with the Congress until recently. With the large-scale change in the generation of voters, that attachment naturally waned to a considerable extent. I think this is an important factor in any analysis of the Congress Party's changing vicissitudes vis-a-vis the attitude of the people.

It's programmes as well as thought processes should therefore be moulded so as to establish a new emotional nexus with the younger electorate. A whole lot of new thinking has to go into the Congress ethos hereafter.

[Kirpekar] Has the electorate voted for keeping your party out of power, especially as it is going through some turmoil, dissidence and defiance of authority? Do you feel disturbed by the recent developments in which the image of your party has taken a beating?

[Rao] If the Lok Sabha electoral verdict is to be interpreted in terms of "keeping out". the conclusion is that it has kept every party out of power. We may now adopt an interpretation which makes the verdict of the people meaningful and not a counsel of despair. Let us start with the assumption that the people willed a government positively and not a return to the polls.

Next, I would emphatically deny that this party is sustained on power alone. For 62 years during the freedom struggle, and several times after independence — both in the states and the Centre — the Congress was without power. Yet it is not true to say that the Congress is non-existent anywhere in the country today. This is a plain and verifiable fact and not an alibi for Congress defeats in elections. Let me, however, add that dissidence, in discipline, etc., are bad — undoubtedly bad. All of us in the Congress should try to rectify this situation.

[Kirpekar] What is your response to the criticism voiced against you and the demand that you step down from office? Any comments on the recent happenings in the Congress Working Committee [CWC] in which you enjoy majority support?

[Rao] The CWC is an exalted and free forum. It has always steered the party during its eventful history. It is our highest body and has conducted itself as a custodian of the Congress constitution. I have always respected and will always respect its wishes.

[Kirpekar] What is your stand in the Lakhubhai Pathak case?

[Rao] Since the matter is sub-judice, I would not like to say anything on it.

[Kirpekar] Why is it that politicians patronise tantriks and god men like Chandraswami who in turn exploit their contacts with politicians?

[Rao] Tantriks and god men have been thriving for over a 1000 years, long before politicians began patronising them and scribes began to write about them and give them free publicity.

[Kirpekar] As leader of the largest party in Parliament supporting the United Front government from the outside, what would you say is the future of this government? With all the ideological contradictions and ego problems inherent in a 13-party coalition, can it survive and deliver?

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[Rao] The situation being admittedly new and complex, doubts may arise regarding the government's stability, etc. This is only natural. At the same time, almost all political crystal-gazers seem to find only the era of coalitions ahead. Given these stark realities, it follows that we cannot afford to lose heart and succumb to the challenge in advance.

Instead, we should make our best effort to usher in the spirit and ethos of coalition right now, instead of doubting and doubting. My personal belief is that it is not beyond the resourcefulness and statesmanship available in the country to make the UF [United Front] government run for the full term.

[Kirpekar] Since quite a few political leaders are saying that the era of coalition governments at the Centre has begun, do you feel disturbed about India's future?

[Rao] I would not pronounce definitively that a single party will never get absolute majority in the Lok Sabha hereafter. However, it needs to be realised that the aspirations of the electorate are more complex and variegated today than in past decades. This would result in smaller formations emerging from elections in larger numbers.

To forge a stable government would, therefore, require more and more a spirit of coalition, which in practice means accommodation, cooperation and a conscious effort to lay emphasis on areas of agreement. To begin with, this new situation would tend to bewilder the essentially party-oriented egos of politicians. But I am certain that the exigencies of state craft and governance will bring in closer understanding all-round. In a longer time-frame, there is nothing disturbing in this.

[Kirpekar] In an interview to this newspaper on June 1, 1991, you had said that the Nehru line will abide and that the alternative to it was "fascism". You were criticised while ushering in economic reforms on the ground that you had succumbed to the IMF and the World Bank diktats and deviated from the Nehru line. Any comments?

[Rao] I can repeat what I said in 1991 today with equal validity. We continued the Nehru line. We continued the mixed economy changing the mix as required in the changed conditions. We have not locked our public sector undertakings although we had no money to expand them, while most of them kept losing. We introduced economic reform "with a human face" — which derives directly from tile Nehru line.

We did not take recourse to any exit policy as it would not suit our populous and employment-scarce country. We did not surrender completely our policy framework to the market. We chose the "market plus" approach with massive intervention through state funds at the lowest poverty levels directly.

Eschewing extremes, we tread a middle path — again the essence of the Nehru line. We did not capitulate to any outside authority in matters where our perceptions happened to be different. We belied all these charges, by showing results.

[Kirpekar] You had also said then that "the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] stands for the destruction of the system which the Congress stands for". After five years of prime ministership and interaction with the BJP before and after the Ayodhya tragedy, what is your view of the BJP today?

[Rao] I believe that the BJP, as a political party, is antithetical to the essence of secularism as enshrined in the Indian Constitution and as we understand it. Besides, many of the BJP's promised programmes, such as abolition of Article 370 of the Constitution, abrogation of the Minorities Commission, imposition of Uniform Civil Code, non-acceptance, at any rate ambivalence, of non-alignment in foreign policy, etc., are diametrically opposed to what the Congress stands for. My views have been fully confirmed in the last five years.

India: Spokesman Rejects Pakistan Charges of Bomb Involvement

BK2407130096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has called the Pakistan president's allegation that New Delhi is having its hand in the recent terrorist activities in Pakistan as entirely false and baseless. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in New Delhi today that India is committed to friendly relations with Pakistan. He said outstanding bilateral issues could be resolved only through mutual discussion. The spokesman said that the prime minister, Mr. Deve Gowda, has suggested to his Pakistani counterpart that foreign secretary-level talks should be resumed between the two countries.

India: Minister Denies Increased LTTE Activities in Tamil Nadu

BK2507055796 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Report by Upali Rupasinghe from New Delhi—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TAMIL Nadu chief minister M. Karunanidhi had assured the Union Home Minister Indrajith Gupta that his government was keen that Tamil Nadu should not be allowed to be misused by any Sri

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Lankan militant outfit, including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), to pursue violence.

Karunanidhi making a short statement in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Tuesday [23 July] evening said that Gupta had spent about 30 minutes with him during his visit to Madras and Gupta discussed matters of State and the LTTE issue.

"Some people were spreading falsehoods that LTTE movement had increased in Tamil Nadu after the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] came to power, with the mean motive of having the government dismissed on that score," Karunanidhi said.

Karunanidhi made these comments when three opposition AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] members staged a walk-out in the Tamil Nadu Assembly alleging increase in the LTTE movement in the state and sourcing the charge to a media interview of the Union Home Minister Indrajit Gupta during his recent Madras visit.

Thamarikani who led the walk-out claimed that the Union Home Minister had faulted the DMK government for not co-operating with the Centre in putting down the LTTE threat in the region.

"The state government is not concerned about national security", Thamaraikani said before the walk out.

Meanwhile, Justice Milap Chand Jain, chairman of the Jain Commission, probing the conspiracy aspects of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case while expressing his displeasure over the prosecution's reluctance in allowing certain witnesses to be examined by the panel directed the government to inform him, whom it proposed to examine or exempt.

The matter came up during the proceedings of the commission when the additional Solicitor-General, K.T.S. Tulsi objected to the commission examining S. Kumudavalli, a congress worker from Tamil Nadu.

Moving an application before the panel, Tulsi said Kumudavalli was a witness before the trial court in Poonamalee, Madras and this would amount to contempt and the proceedings of the designated court should be protected till it completed its trial.

The examination of the witness would be equivalent to not only interfering with the trial court proceedings but also in demolishing the purpose of the trial, Tulsi said pleading that the examination should be deferred.

Reacting to Tulsi's plea Jain said: "Five years have passed. You are not allowing me to proceed." Following the arguments, the Commission began hearing Kumuduvalli in camera. "I have nothing to do with the trial court," Jain said while concluding the days proceedings.

Iran

Iran: Commentary—U.S. Sanctions Out of Step With Present Reality

LD2407173096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill which steps up U.S. economic sanctions against Islamic Republic of Iran on Tuesday 23 July. The punishments called for in the law include those foreign companies which invest over 40 million dollars annually in the Iranian oil and gas sector. The U.S. policy to step up economic sanctions against Iran has gone into effect from approximately 13 months ago and it can firmly be said that this has been one the most important issues which had occupied the U.S. foreign policy during the past year.

The U.S. has, at numerous times, been criticized by the European Union and the World Trade Organization for insisting to execute what it calls its economic punishment policy. Many critics and opponents of such U.S. policies evaluate Washington's behavior toward Iran as exaggerated and far from the realities of the time. They stress that basically the U.S. sanctions and decisions cannot be effective considering the WTO regulations. From their viewpoint the EU member states consider the U.S. policy to tighten its economic sanctions against Iran is actually based on unilateral U.S. aims and formed as a result of political pressures and drives from inside that country and therefore there is no reason to spread such policies to other countries.

Considering these conditions, the U.S. House of Representatives' ratification of that bill is a struggle launched from a position weakness, which even Washington's allies do not take seriously. A clear example of disregard for this U.S. naive action is the recent decision by the French enterprise Total, which announced respect for its obligations of investment in a number of Iranian offshore oil fields in the Persian Gulf.

In any case, according to political and foreign sources two factors are involved in encouraging Clinton to support this law. The first is his defeat in trying to isolate Iran in the international arena. And, second, the Zionist political pressures on him and the U.S. Congress, which have expectantly been intensified on the eve of U.S. Presidential elections of November. In these observers' opinion, to achieve success in its policies, the U.S. Government is dependent on a number of needs, the most important of which is international support for its political and economic wishes. Fortunately, however, it

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seems that tight competition between Europe and the U.S. will not give the Americans such an opportunity.

Iran: Commentary—U.S. Sanctions Verge on International Terrorism

LD2407184596 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1700 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill which targets non-American companies investing in the gas and oil sectors of Iran and Libya. In view of the fact that this bill was passed by the American Senate last week, the ball now seems to be in Clinton's court. In other words, in the next stage, he will either sign the bill and pit himself against the governments of countries where these companies originate from, or he will opt to veto the decision, thereby deliberately challenging the U.S. Congress on the eve of the presidential elections in that country.

The imposition of unilateral sanctions and punishments, and the linking of these measures to bilateral and multilateral international relations, is altogether an illegal and unacceptable move which will certainly bring about retaliatory actions by the various countries of the world.

Experts believe that the new move by the American Congress presents a new interpretation of state terrorism. As in the past, the U.S. is the main supporter and champion of this interpretation. In reality, Washington's unilateral moves on the arena of international developments are tantamount to extending the concepts of international and state terrorisms to blind economic terrorism which targets the ordinary citizens of a given country. Moreover, the destructive impact that this type of terrorism will have on the international order and the global peace and stability is far more devastating and dangerous than the previously-known types of terrorism.

In other words, by resorting to economic terrorism, the U.S. executive and legislative powers want to make up for their impotence and failures in the other arenas of international competition.

But will Washington be able to use this opportunity? Moreover, will this strategy prove advantageous to a fast-fading cold war era mode of thought which is still retained and embraced by U.S. Congress and White House officials?

Iran: Cuban Charge D'affaires Condemns U.S. Sanctions Bill

LD2407121096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The U.S. House of Representatives has ratified a bill to increase sanctions against foreign companies which invest more than $40 million per annum in Iranian and Libyan oil industries. [passage omitted]

In an interview with the Cuban charge d'affaires in Tehran, our correspondent asked for his views on the subject. Mr. Ricardo condemned the ratification of yet another bill to penalize foreign companies that deal with Iran and Libya. He said: Those laws are rejected by Cuba. He added: Cuba, alongside the Islamic Republic of Iran, will stand against foreign colonialists. The Cuban diplomat said the opposition of international forums to America's hegemonic policies is a factor in the ever-increasing isolation of the White House.

Iran: Tehran Stresses Similarity of Labor, Likud Parties

LD2207110896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0956 GMT 21 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] After the new Zionist regime Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's first visit to Cairo last Thursday [18 July], efforts by parties interested in breaking the deadlock in the peace process are continuing to find out about the results of the meeting between Mubarak and Netanyahu. To the same end, yesterday the head of the self-rule establishment, Yasir 'Arafat, went to Cairo to find out about their talks and to coordinate his stances with Husni Mubarak before his own first meeting with the new Zionist regime foreign minister, David Levi. Today the Egyptian foreign minister, 'Amr Musa, is to carry a message to Damascus from Husni Mubarak for Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad about the results of Mubarak's talks with Netanyahu on the peace process and Syrian issues and to assess the views of Syrian authorities on this.

During the two-hour-long talks between Netanyahu and Husni Mubarak on Palestinian issues, there was not much progress on the vital aspects of the peace process — on which the realization of the peace process is totally dependent — but only on peripheral issues such as Tel Aviv declaring its readiness to mitigate the five-month-old siege of the self-rule area and resuming talks with 'Arafat at a lower political level.

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As for issues regarding Syria, Netanyahu repeated the Zionist regime's former policy — formed during the rule of the Labor Party on the basis of imposing on Damascus preconditions desired by that regime — for resuming talks with Syria. Although these remarks by Netanyahu cannot be to the liking of the Arab states which are party to the dispute and alleviate their concerns over the return of their occupied lands, they raise new realities since they are considered as a sort of retreat in comparison with his earlier extremist stance. The clarification of these realities is of importance. Political experts believe that Netanyahu, by showing flexibility — an approach which seems to have been adopted by him in coordination with America — is trying to mitigate one of the present effective factors in increasing Arab unity, that is the concerns felt by Arab leaders about the continuation of the expansionist policies of that regime and by weakening the Arab front, continue its aggressive policy with ease of mind. On that basis, coordination between Arab states in order to implement the Arab summit decisions seems more necessary at this point than at any other time.

On the other hand, the repetition of the Labor Party's position regarding Syria by the leader of the extremist Likud party, Netanyahu, demonstrates that the expression "peace-seeking" has been chosen through coordination by those two parties as a new tool for expansionism by that regime. That is in order to continue their strategy of creeping occupation under its cover. A review of these two parties' performance — including the outbreak of the 1948, 1967, and 1973 wars during the 29-year rule of the Labor Party, which resulted in thousands of Arabs being martyred and millions of Palestinian becoming refugees; as well as the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Tel Aviv during the Likud party rule in occupied Palestine — prove the fact that the Labor Party cannot be described as dovish and the Likud party as hawkish. It is more true to describe both those parties as aggressors and expansionist. Despite some differences of opinion, they are unanimous in managing the Zionists' internal affairs regarding the violation of the rights of Arabs, especially the Palestinians, and they adopt similar methods for that.

Iran: 'Sources' Expect Another Israeli-Hizballah Deal

TA2307171696 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources in the Iranian capital say that the next deal between Hizballah and Israel could lead to the release of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd and Mustafa Dirani, who are in Israeli custody, as well as the release of 25 prisoners from Hizballah. This, in return for the help promised by Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah in uncovering the fate of Israeli pilot Ron Arad.

Iran: Commentary Discusses Israeli-Hizballah Swap

LD2207153396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in English 1130 GMT 22 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Finally, based on a brokered agreement between the Lebanese Islamic Resistance Movement and the Zionist regime, 45 Muslim fighters kept at the Zionist prison camp of al-Khiyam, situated in the Zionist-occupied south Lebanese territory, were exchanged for a number of Zionist POW's and corpses.

In the first phase of the POW and corpse exchange, which took place on Sunday, 21 July, 120 bodies of Lebanese freedom fighters were also handed over to the Lebanese Government. According to political analysts, the propaganda campaign launched by the Zionist mass media in the last few days is a policy to cover up the Zionist regime's anti-human nature. It is clear that, despite the [?wailing] gesture of the Zionist press on the issue, the two Zionist military men whose bodies were exchanged on Sunday had been killed in the Zionist regime's aggression upon Lebanese territory. In fact, the two Zionists were killed in Lebanon in 1986, when their fighter aircraft had been shot down by the Lebanese antiaircraft artillery.

In contrast, the bodies of the 120 Lebanese Muslim fighters, who had been martyred in the way of freeing their motherland from Zionist occupation, are solid proof of the anti-human and aggressive nature of the Zionist occupiers. The case is even more dramatic when considering that these martyred fighters took on a 6,000 [strong] Zionist military force — with the least military equipment — in the occupied south Lebanon to drive out the Zionist aggressor regime from their homeland.

As a matter of fact the body of each Lebanese martyr, who had been martyred in Lebanese soil in fighting the Zionist invaders of their country, is a document which worries the Zionist regime to the extent that it has been led to its propaganda cover up, launched during the recent days. Furthermore, the al-Khiyam prison camp in occupied south Lebanon, which keeps 250 male and female Lebanese POW's in itself, is also a clear proof of Zionist occupation and aggression in southern Lebanon. The prisoners of this dreaded prison camp are deprived of the least humane facilities and so far even international humanitarian organizations, such as

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the International Committee of the Red Cross, have not been able to visit the prisoners of the infamous Zionist-run concentration camp.

The world's public opinion has only come to know about the despicable conditions of the prison through the POW's who have been able to escape from the horrible camp. Therefore, although the Zionist regime's propaganda has been trying to portray the receiving of the two Zionist military bodies as a softening of the Lebanese Islamic Resistance Movement's position, it is more than obvious that the movement, previously and on numerous occasions, had, as a humanitarian move, proposed to exchange Zionist bodies with hundreds of innocent Lebanese, who have been kidnapped above other means [as heard] by the Zionist regime of the time when the Labor government was ruling in Tel Aviv. This is why, according to the Lebanese Muslim fighters, as long as the occupation of south Lebanon is continued, the fight against the Zionist regime will remain a permanent cause for the Lebanese Muslim people.

Iran: Iranian Jewish Leader Denies Poor Treatment Jews

LD2407170296 Tehran IRNA in English 1444 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 24, IRNA — A prominent Iranian Jewish leader on Wednesday [24 July] categorically denied the allegations of an Israeli member of parliament and certain foreign mass media about the status of Jews in Iran.

The head of the Association of Iranian Jews, Haroun Kalimi Yeshayaei, also described such claims as baseless and part of propaganda campaign stemming from the disputes between various Zionist political parties.

In an interview with IRNA, he referred to the death of an Iranian Jew and said such incidents might happen to every one either Jew or Muslim in a big city like Tehran.

However, he said the Iranian judiciary and law enforcement forces are investigating the case (the death of the Iranian Jew).

He said that with the Likud party coming to power in Israel, the Zionist regime is now seeking to settle its political accounts with the Islamic Republic through Iranian Jews.

The Likud party is raising such claims about the status of Jews in Iran in order to use the issue as a winning card against the rival party, he said.

Yeshayaei stressed the improvement of social, cultural and religious life of the Iranian Jewish community during the post revolution era compared to the status before the revolution.

He said the cultural background of the Iranian people has no room for racist mentalities.

The Jewish community of Iran is of the opinion that there is no anti-Jewish policy in the whole system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Yeshayaei said.

He said the well-known understanding between the Muslims and the Jews in Iran is evident for every impartial visitor to Tehran or other cities of the country.

Yeshayaei explained that at present there are 23 synagogues in Tehran which are all active, adding that the Iranian Jews have their own hospitals, schools, sports clubs and youth clubs.

That existence of special Jewish schools does not mean that Jewish students cannot enroll in other schools, he said, adding that the Association of Iranian Jews has preferred to leave the decision on school choice to the parents of Jewish students.

The decisive opinions of the late Imam Khomeyni expressed a time when the anti-Iran propaganda was at its pick [as received], has now been materialized.

The late founder of the Islamic Revolution announced in 1979 that Iran made a distinction between the Iranian Jewish community and the Zionist regime.

Iran: Tehran Radio on Possible Palestinian Intifadah Resumption

LD2407223996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2054 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Middle East affairs analysts consider the statements of the legislative council of the Palestinian self-rule establishment to be an implicit protest by those Palestinians who compromised against the mistaken moderating of the Palestinian Charter and say that this shows the likelihood of the Islamic intifadah being resumed. The statements were to the effect that if the Zionist regime fails to carry out its undertakings concerning the compromise process, the self-rule establishment will reinstate the Articles of the Palestinian Charter on armed struggle against the occupiers of Quds [Jerusalem].

The re-stressing of armed struggle comes after the failure of the compromise plans and the proven lack of credibility of the pledges given by the compromisers to create a better situation. That enjoys the support of

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all the Palestinians since it ends the dispute between the Palestinians over the ways the occupied lands should be repossessed.

Existing studies confirm the likelihood of the resumption of the intifadah in occupied lands. In fact, the Zionist regime's repeated insistence on the total violation of the rights of Palestinians and the inability of the compromise plans to realize the expectations of those who sought to compromise has discredited the approach of this particular group towards the occupiers of Palestinian lands. It has also increased the tendency towards ways in which they could have the initiative. Therefore, it now seems that the popular intifadah movement is on the threshold of a rebirth.

Iran: President Appoints New Iranian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

96LA0299A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 15 May 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] On the suggestion of the minister of foreign affairs and the approval of the president, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Reza Nuri-Shahrudi was appointed as the extraordinary and fully authorized ambassador of Iran in Saudi Arabia. Previously, he was in charge of the Iranian Embassy in Libya for six years.

Iran: Mirsalim, Chinese Envoy Discuss Expansion of Cultural Ties

LD2407171896 Tehran IRNA in English 1349 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 24, IRNA — Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Wang Shijie and Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Mostafa Mirsalim in a meeting here Wednesday [24 July] underlined expansion of cultural ties between Tehran and Beijing.

Referring to traditional ties between Iran and China in the fields of culture and arts, the two sides stressed the need to pay more attention to the Silk Road and to make use of the route in order to improve their cultural ties.

Saying that China had been present in the cultural scene of Iran, the Iranian minister called for holding of cultural weeks in each other's capitals. Moreover, he said that facilities should be provided for travel to Iran and China by Iranian and Chinese tourists in order that they can watch closely the construction and cultural activities being done in both countries.

The Iranian minister underlined that Iranian and Chinese officials should revise and improve the cultural agreements concluded between the two countries. Efforts should be made for strengthening of ties between Iranian and Chinese news agencies, press, radio and televisions as well as their cultural heritage, Mirsalim said. He called on his Chinese counterpart to pay an official visit to Iran in order to expand bilateral cultural ties.

On his part, Wang Shijie called for resistance to the obscene cutlural phenomena of the Western culture, because Westerners tried to transfer their cultural issues along with their technology. China pays attention to strengthening the foundations and roots of cultural traditions and to raising the youth's awareness in order to confront Western culture, the Chinese diplomat underlined.

Iran: Egypt's 'Irresponsible Utterances' Criticized

NC2207170096 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 9 Jul 96 p 16

[Commentary by Gholamreza 'Askari: "Egypt and a Fallacious Analysis of the Regional Situation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The irresponsible utterances of Usamah al-Baz, in his interview with the Egyptian news agency and weekly "ROSE AL-YUSUF," make it necessary to mention some important points:

It is no secret to news and political circles worldwide that Egypt has continually sought to forge and normalize relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and each time it has encountered the basic condition of the Islamic Republic of Iran that it should first reevaluate Cairo-Tel Aviv relations.

The question here is: For what reason is Cairo seeking to create the impression that Iran is seeking to normalize relations with Egypt.

It seems that a short while ago King Husayn was the focus of the attention of the United States and the Zionist regime, and despite being the pioneer of the compromise with the Zionist regime Egypt has now been expelled from its position as the center of the attention of the United States and Tel Aviv. There is no doubt that this has provoked the Egyptian echelons and motivated them to seek concessions from the United States at any cost.

Accordingly, in view of the current situation, the only recourse for Cairo was to pin false and baseless accusations, without any documentary evidence against the Islamic Republic of Iran. What is even more strange is that Cairo rejected the suggestion, which did not have any extraneous implications (the convocation of a tripartite Tehran-Damascus-Cairo session) and deemed it a hostile (!) stance toward the Arab countries.

Cairo's perception is that by depicting Iran-Arab relations as turbulent, it will be able to gain status that it

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has not succeeded in getting so far among the Arabs (especially the Persian Gulf littoral states). The most important confirmation that this effort has been futile so far is the Islamic Republic of Iran's adherence to the principle of good neighborliness toward its Arab neighbors in the Persian Gulf. It would seem superfluous to even mention that currently Iran has the highest level of diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural relations with its Arab neighbors.

Cairo should never forget that the reason the Zionist regime has been able to inflict the most detrimental effects upon the destinies of the Arabs today, and to transform the entire Middle East into a venue of insecurity for its native residents, is due to Egypt's pioneering the disgraceful compromise with such a regime.

The Arabs, who are considered the main victims of Zionist terrorism, are well aware that Egypt was the first country to hoist the Zionist flag on its soil. It will never be able to assume the helm of Arab leadership by legitimizing terrorism and creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the region.

Hence, one can only hope that Egypt can comprehend the realities and reappraise the political situation in the region, and tread a path that can enable this country and the entire region to move toward a peace that all need at this juncture.

Iran: Commentary Discusses Bosnian Delegation to Serbia

LD2407184996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 24 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Bosnian vice president, Ejup Ganic, who is leading the visit by a high-level Bosnian delegation of Belgrade, met and talked with Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic, on Tuesday [23 July]. This is the first official visit by a high-level Bosnian delegation after the start of the Balkan war in 1992. Before this visit, the leaders of the two states had only met and talked in the Dayton peace conference, organized by a third party, namely the United States. Nevertheless, following the recognition of each state by the other side, no official delegation had visited either Sarajevo or Belgrade until last Tuesday.

Meanwhile there are no political relations between the two countries right now and there has been no exchange of any emissaries between them until now. Under the existing conditions and considering the upcoming Bosnian general elections, the first official visit of Belgrade by a Bosnian delegation is weighed as significant by political analysts. The presence of this delegation in Belgrade has brought to reality the actual recognition of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Serbia and despite the lingering of concerns over Belgrade's radical nationalist leaders to be still thinking about the dismemberment of Bosnia, this recognition might help the promotion of peaceful coexistence between the two sides.

Also, in spite of Serbia's policy of hurdle throwing in the way of relations between the two countries, the Bosnian Government, with its policy of restraint, has always been trying to eliminate differences and promote cooperation between Sarajevo and Belgrade. In fact improvements in political and economic relations between Bosnia and Serbia will promote trust and confidence among Bosnian Serb community. This is because the nationalist criminal leaders of Bosnian Serbs have constantly been working to convey the thought that Muslim or Croat rule in Bosnia will lead to the violation of Serb rights in that country and, through the spread of this fallacy among the Bosnian Serb society, they have continuously been following the goal of separating the Serbian inhabited regions of Bosnia and form the Greater Serbia.

Beside its political and psychological effects, the visit by the Bosnian delegation of Belgrade realizes a legitimate right of Sarajevo which Bosnian Serbs, under the pretext of the Republika Srpska, have been trying to ignore and deny all the time. On the other hand, the visit by the Bosnian delegation of Belgrade is important from economic aspects also. The delegation, which includes a number of Bosnian ministers and businessmen, discussed with their Serbian counterparts a number of issues, such as air, rail, and [?asphalt] roads and long-distance telephone connections. The expansion of bilateral relations in the mentioned fields could have a major impact on the promotion of peaceful coexistence between the two sides.

It is clear that before establishing political relations, it is necessary that the two countries should eliminate grounds for suspicion and hostility and activate transportational links as a useful means to further that cause. On the whole it is expected that such mutual visits by the two sides will gradually ease the existing problems in the Balkans and create a better atmosphere to implement the Bosnian peace accord in a more complete and comprehensive way.

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Iran: Velayati Describes Reconciliation Efforts With Turkey

LD2507103896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The prospect of ties between Iran and Turkey, in the long term, is without any tension and is calm. Announcing this in an interview with a correspondent of the Central News Unit, Mr. Akbar Velayati, our country's foreign minister, said: Iran and Turkey are trying to strengthen their ties at various levels. The volume of ties between the two countries in the past years is the manifestation of serious intent by the two sides in this direction.

Mr. Velayati explained the details of recent developments in the ties between the two countries, and said: Delegations from both sides have been dispatched to each other's countries, and after holding talks and discussions in Ankara regarding the recent incidents along the borders of the two countries, it was claimed that Iranian borderguards raided a number of Turkey's border regions. However, when Mr. Ala'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister, visited Turkey and handed over a message from President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, it was decided to make efforts to resolve these differences during subsequent visits.

Mr. Velayati said that President Hashemi-Rafsanjani would soon pay a visit to Turkey in response to an invitation by Mr. Demirel to visit Turkey.

Our country's foreign minister referred to the visit to Tehran of the Qatari foreign minister, and said: We must give priority to our ties with those countries who are member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and are interested in having friendly ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Qatar is one of these countries.

Mr. Velayati emphasized the need for the existing problems in Iran's ties with a number of countries in the Persian Gulf to be removed and said that Iran's foreign relations are based on good-neighborly relations. He said: Our policy is based on the expanding ties and cooperating with neighbors. We are ready to strengthen and consolidate the bridges of trust.

Iran: Russian Ties With Muslim World, Chechen Policy Viewed

LD2507091896 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 21 Jul 96 p 2

[Viewpoint by H. Najafi: "Of Russia's Credibility"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russian leaders had no alternative to revising their foreign policy and making in effect changes in their outlook vis-a-vis Muslim countries, particularly those in their neighborhood.

Presently Moscow's relations with most of its Muslim neighbors, including Iran, are cordial.

Commenting on the subject of Russia's ties with the Muslim world, Pravda in its Thursday [18 July] edition emphasized the importance of this attitude on the part of Russian leaders.

However, the influential daily thought it necessary to point out the possibility that President Boris Yeltsin, having been elected for a second term, may give more importance to greater coordination between Russia and the United States. The daily believes that this coordination is likely to widen the gap between Russia and the Muslim world and consequently result in the loss of mutual understanding between Russia and the Muslim states.

Disagreeing with Pravda's views, rather speculations, we tend to believe that President Yeltsin, as he clearly demonstrated during his first term in office, is not going to allow his outlook to be influenced by Washington.

There is reason to believe that the existing understanding and mutual respect between Russia and the Muslim world brought about because of Mr. Yeltsin's vision regarding the changed global circumstances following the end of the cold war, will not be blurred irrespective of closer Russian-U.S. relations.

But the threat to this situation is Moscow's handling of the crisis in Chechnya.

Too much, and apparently unnecessary, Muslim blood was and is being shed there. Naturally the full-fledged military assault on Chechen villages and non-combatants on Kremlin orders will cast Moscow in bad light as far as Muslim nations are concerned.

A peace deal between Moscow and Chechen-separatists made prior to the Russian presidential election now seems a dead issue. Both sides blame each other for breaching the peace accord.

Muslim observers are shocked at the loss of innocent Chechen lives and the indiscriminate bombing raids on their villages. In a recent air and artillery attack on Gekhi, a village in the southwestern lowlands, of Chechnya, 600 homes were destroyed and 47 persons, mostly civilians, were killed.

The renewed Russian onslaught against Chechen fighters and non-combatants alike is indeed reminiscent of the Soviet-era atrocities in Muslim Afghanistan. But still, that was the Red Army's foreign war which again

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translated into the Soviet Union's sole military defeat outside its borders.

Muslims and Moscow's true friends would like to see reason prevail in the ongoing Chechen crisis which, inter alia, has the potential to bury Moscow's political credibility and its economic reforms in the same grave.

Iran: Agreement Signed With Georgia on Expanding Relations

LD2207202696 Tehran IRIB Television Third Program Network in Persian 1815 GMT 22 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran and Georgia have signed a memorandum of understanding. In the memo, the two countries' foreign ministers announced their governments' support for the expansion of bilateral, cultural, scientific, educational, and artistic cooperation.

The two countries are also expected to cooperate in the reconstruction and protection of historical monuments and cultural heritage.

Iran: Tehran Views Pakistani, Indian Stances on Test Ban Talks

LD2207091296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 22 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] As a fresh round of talks on the nuclear test ban treaty are to begin in Geneva, Pakistan has announced that the pact will be null and void unless all nuclear powers put their signature to it. Islamabad has also said that India, Pakistan, and the Zionist regime, which have become nuclear powers recently, should all sign the treaty.

The talks are to start on 29 July but it should be pointed out that the previous meeting failed to implement the treaty following the rejection of an amended proposal by India.

Pakistan has said that it does not intend to destroy 40 years of work by the international powers by preventing a comprehensive agreement on the ban on nuclear tests, but now Islamabad's recent attitude must be taken into consideration because it insists on the signing of the treaty by India as well as the Zionist regime.

As the two rival powers in South Asia, India and Pakistan have always used the argument that nuclear deterrence is at the service of national security and sovereignty. They have also said that efforts by the great nuclear powers to limit their activities within the context of the treaty are unfair.

Both governments in New Delhi and Islamabad believe that the international powers do not intend to destroy or limit their own nuclear armament, and that their policy of nuclear containment is an effort to continue their hegemony in this area.

India is particularly unhappy about Washington's policy of dual containment in the Indian sub-continent and Southwest Asia, which, political experts believe, has further provoked the arms race and led to the continuation of an armed peace in this sensitive part of the world.

There is no doubt that international security and peace will not be achieved by limiting the activities of a few countries and without an active destruction of the weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, by the main nuclear powers.

At any rate, insistence by both India and Pakistan that the Zionist regime, which has huge nuclear armaments, must sign the treaty, indicates that neither Islamabad nor New Delhi believe that preferential treatment here will serve world security and peace.

Iran: Paper Urges Resolution of Kashmir Problem

LD2307152896 Tehran IRNA in English 0740 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 23, IRNA — A morning daily Tuesday [23 July] editorialized on critical situation in Kashmir saying, after so many years of bloodshed, destruction and waste of constructive potentials, the Kashmir problem still exists with no solution in sight.

Referring to Iran's good offices offered in the past, as an honest broker for mediation between India and Pakistan, 'IRAN NEWS' stated, "but the offer remained in cold storage because of Indian reluctance."

Urging Islamabad and New Delhi to improve the subcontinent's economy and industry and not to spend their energies on fighting each other verbally or militarily, it said that the Kashmir issue should be resolved soon over the negotiating table with the participation of both nations' friends, so that the leaders of India and Pakistan can carry on with the enormous development tasks ahead of them.

"What India and Pakistan want is a just solution acceptable to both countries, through bilateral negotiations or through mediation by a friendly third country.

An honest solution to a 50-year-old conflict will not only create stability and peace in west Asia, but it will also preserve picturesque Kashmir, it concluded.

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Iran: Rafsanjani Meets Qatari Foreign Minister, Discusses Ties

LD2407113996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister of Qatar, today.

At the meeting the Qatari foreign minister submitted a message from the Amir of Qatar conveying that country's emphasis on the importance of strengthening friendly ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In his message the Amir of Qatar stressed Iran's importance and role in the maintenance of peace and stability in the region and described the relations between Qatar and Iran as good and improving. He also stressed the necessity for more consultation between friendly countries in the region to strengthen the spirit of solidarity and prevent exploitation by foreigners.

The Qatari foreign minister expressed his country's desire to expand diplomatic, economic, and commercial cooperation with Iran.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the importance of the expansion of regional cooperation in preserving unity and stability and solving problems in friendly and neighboring countries.

He stressed Iran's political determination to establish and maintain ties and to cooperate with Persian Gulf littoral states, based on the interests of the regional nations, and to bring about unity and solidarity in order to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Iran: AFP on Content of Qatari Amir's Fax to President on Ties

NC2407123196 Paris AFP in English 1149 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tehran, July 24 (AFP)—Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani met President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Wednesday [24 July] to deliver a message from the Qatari amir on boosting ties, the president's office said.

Qatari amir, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, stressed in his message Iran's "important role in preserving peace and stability" in the Gulf.

He called for cooperation between "friendly countries in the region towards strengthening their solidarity and preventing foreigners from taking advantage" of the situation, he said quoted by in a fax received by AFP from the president's office. [passage omitted]

Iran: Rafsanjani Receives Visiting Zimbabwean Foreign Minister

LD2307114796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Stanley Mudenge, who gave him a message from Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe.

In his message, Zimbabwe's president once again invited Iran's president to visit Zimbabwe. He also called for the expansion of cooperation between that country and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Mudenge described the outcome of his talks with Iran as very positive, saying: In spite of the West's effort to isolate African countries, the exchanges of senior delegations between African and Asian countries indicates the importance that the peoples of these two continents attach to the expansion of relations.

Mr. Mudenge referred to the formation of a joint Iranian-Zimbabwean economic commission during his visit to Iran and described it as a planned step toward finding ways of widening bilateral relations and cooperation in a spirit of solidarity between two friendly countries.

Mr. Mudenge submitted a report on the solar energy conference in Harare, capital of Zimbabwe, and invited the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate actively in that conference. He expressed the hope that the visit of Islamic Iran's president to Zimbabwe will constitute a turning point in the expansion of relations between the two friendly countries.

For his part, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran will endeavor to expand relations further with African countries. He said: Africa is a big continent with huge countries that have rich natural resources and talented, skilled labor forces, and Africa has an important and fitting status in the world. He added: African countries should play more active roles in world forums. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Iran is seriously pursuing the establishment of active air and sea routes between Asian and African countries, with the aim of increasing direct economic and trade contacts and exchanges.

The president also referred to Iran's progress in the field of research into solar energy, global warming, and the use of wind for electricity production. He said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to participate in the solar energy conference in Zimbabwe.

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Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also accepted the invitation extended to him by Zimbabwe's president to visit that country. He expressed the hope that he will be able to do so as soon as it is convenient.

Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Government Officials on Economy

LD2307120296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Last night, at a meeting with deputy ministers and deputy heads of public organizations, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed: Among the most important factors that have contributed to the system's success in strengthening and expanding the country's economic foundation have been a strong popular base, the self-confidence of the country's officials, managers, and planners, and boldness in decision-making and in tackling big tasks.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani considered that the country's dependence on oil and single-product export in the past were the cause of the sluggishness and stagnation of all the sectors and areas of society. He said: By understanding the negative consequences of dependence on oil revenues and the wastage of huge resources and valuable reserves, which are necessary for development, innovation, and production, the government had to inevitably introduce adjustment policies and reform the country's economic structure.

The president added: The country's past extreme dependency on foreign exchange has today been considerably reduced and the reconstruction, rise in production, and capabilities and development of Iran have attracted the attention of international analysts to great developments in Iran, its fast-growing economy, and strong foundation.

The president said that the production of 6 million tonnes of surplus steel annually in the country is the result of the country's industrial growth and its moves toward self-sufficiency.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also expressed the belief that the current calm prevailing in the market and the control of inflation are the outcome of the country's principled economic policies. He said: On the whole, the government's long-term plans and big investment undertakings have demonstrated their valuable outcome. With the setting up and opening of factories and industrial units, hundreds of big oil refineries, power stations, and petrochemical complexes, agricultural and animal husbandry projects, and hundreds of other big development projects, we shall be witness to the country's greater economic affluence and social expansion. [passage omitted]

Iran: Ramazanzadeh on Economy, Other Issues

96LA0274F Tehran SALAM in Persian 17 Apr 96 pp 16-17

[Interview with Dr. Fatemeh Ramazanzadeh, candidate for the Fifth Majles from the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, by Parvaneh Mohyi of SALAM; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Note—Continuing the interviews of the Political Service of SALAM with experts regarding the Fifth Majles elections, in this issue, the statements of Dr. Fatemeh Ramazanzadeh, a candidate for the Fifth Majles, who has come to the second phase of the elections from the Coalition of the Imam's Line forces, will be presented to the honorable readers.

[Mohyi] First, tell us about your educational and employment background and your executive positions.

[Ramazanzadeh] I am Fatemeh Ramazanzadeh, a specialized surgeon and a member of the Specialized Board of Gynecology and Obstetrics. I have been engaged in teaching and research for 10 years at the Medical Sciences University of Tehran. Since about a year ago, I have been working as the director general of nutrition, health, and family planning at the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education, which mostly was an executive dimension. I was born to a traditional religious family in Yazd but received all of my education in Tehran. I was present and actively participated in the struggles for the revolution and was also active during the imposed war. The emphasis of the Imam regarding the participation of women as much as possible caused me to choose the field of specialization in women. With the strides that we have made in regards to the education of women, we were able to raise the quality of the field for women and attract the basic support of women for more cooperation, so that at the present 50 percent of the assistants and specialists in gynecology and obstetrics are women.

[Mohyi] In your opinion, what is the cause of the significant reception of people to the elections compared to the previous term?

[Ramazanzadeh] People regard themselves as being the winners of the revolution and, considering the present conditions, feel obliged to take steps to change and improve their affairs—issues such as class differences, cultural and educational issues, employment, etc.—because after 17 or 18 years, people do not expect such a situation. Hence, considering the sensitivity of this juncture and the importance of the Fifth Majles, they

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have sensed the danger that may occur which could be irreparable if they do not seriously participate. Hence, they have come to the field mostly from a sense of duty.

[Mohyi] You referred to the sensitivity of this juncture and the sensitivity of the Fifth Majles. In your opinion, what is this special sensitivity?

[Ramazanzadeh] Mostly, it is about economic and cultural issues. When we deal with the issue of social justice and cultural invasion, we see that we have not been able to succeed in these two issues. These two issues are quite essential, and if they are not addressed today, tomorrow will be too late, and God forbid, we may be forced to compromise our principles with regard to foreign conspiracies, which will cause irreparable damage.

[Mohyi] What is your analysis of the presence of a significant number of women and receiving more votes in some districts?

[Ramazanzadeh] One factor is that the women have been enlightened. Compared to the early days of the revolution, we see a significant increase in the number of literate women, even though still their number is fewer than that of men. The belief has been created in a larger percentage of women that administering the family and the society will be better when women have better management skills. The imam said, men go to heaven from the laps of women, and women are the source of all blessings and good. These statements have motivated an increased sense of duty. Of course, considering their literacy and awareness, women have realized that men in the society have not taken steps to eliminate the problems, as they should. Sometimes when women are asked why they do not come to the field directly, we hear that the grounds are not prepared yet, and if we see sufficient support and management, certainly we will engage in more serious and important activities. Of course, more resources have been provided, but it is still not enough.

[Mohyi] What do you mean by resources?

[Ramazanzadeh] Today, compared to the past, women are accepted in executive positions. Several years ago, in the centers of decisionmaking, if a woman spoke she was not given value. Today, the situation has changed because it is seen that women have greater precision and efficiency.

[Mohyi] So the efforts of women themselves have been the main factor?

[Ramazanzadeh] Their efforts and subsequently the support of the Executive Branch have caused it. For this reason, every day we witness an increased presence of women in domestic and foreign assemblies, because this urgency has been felt.

[Mohyi] Do you think that the urgency has brought them to the field?

[Ramazanzadeh] Yes. Hence, we see that despite the problems that women have, because of a sense of urgency, they spend time and energy and engage in activities. Thank God, the officials have also come to the conclusion that they must prepare the grounds.

[Mohyi] Your statements so far concerned the participation of women at the level of experts, but the fact that there are more votes in certain districts is another issue. What is your opinion?

[Ramazanzadeh] If we want to answer in one sentence, the answer is that the beliefs of all the people, both women and men, regarding the efficiency of women has changed because in comparisons between two managers or experts of the same level, it has been seen that the results of the women's work are better, considering that a woman has other responsibilities as well.

[Mohyi] Do you agree with the view which is sometimes expressed that "voting for women is somehow a reaction to the work of men"?

[Ramazanzadeh] This may be a secondary reason, but it is not the main reason.

[Mohyi] What is your motivation in being involved in this field of competition, because in the society it is asked, why is a woman with an MD interested in going to the Majles?

[Ramazanzadeh] Because she sees the problems objectively. If a physician wants to couple her work with teaching so that others benefit from her specialization as well, she faces obstacles. For this reason, she decides to take steps to remove the obstacles in order for a strong vision to be corrected from the higher levels, so that gradually this belief is strengthened in the people that women can be active on all levels, even legislation, and give opinions.

[Mohyi] Do you think that the Majles can be a base for the change in viewpoints and strengthening correct and positive beliefs?

[Ramazanzadeh] It certainly can. If exchanges of views are engaged in properly in the Majles and cooperation is at the expert level, because people see the Majles issues, they will reach the belief that deputies will make decisions properly. This will correct the views of the masses of the people.

[Mohyi] The issues of development and social justice are seen in the slogans of most candidates and groups.

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What is your opinion and which one do you consider to have priority over the other?

[Ramazanzadeh] In my opinion, neither has priority over the other. We cannot look at these two separately; that is, the planning that we have in my mind for social justice will be accompanied by development, simultaneously. For example, in the economic dimension, concerning the elimination of poverty and providing health care, if we look at it from the perspective of justice and do not say that those who have it use it, and those who don't, so what, we shall have no problems. Certainly, when we provide health care for everyone, alongside it we shall have development. When we plan for taxes and discuss the law of "Where did you get it?" justice will be established. Those palaces which are built next to ghetto dwellings are the result of our not carrying out the distribution of wealth correctly. If our model is not only a model of consumerism; we both create jobs and achieve development.

[Mohyi] One of the other slogans is the issue of the defense of women's rights, which is expressed even by some men who did not support it very much in the previous terms. In your opinion, how serious is this slogan?

[Ramazanzadeh] If women defend women's rights, it can be taken seriously. Regarding men, it is a symbolic issue and is for campaign purposes, considering that the cultural base of men is mostly slogans. Of course, once it is stated, it gradually creates a commitment, and in this way women's issues will be addressed more.

[Mohyi] In your opinion, what is the most important problem of the society?

[Ramazanzadeh] It is the educational and cultural problems. No matter what planning we carry out, as long as our cultural and educational problems exist, we shall not be successful.

[Mohyi] It is customary for candidates to announce their programs ahead of time. What program do you have to support the downtrodden?

[Ramazanzadeh] I am not thinking about offering programs at all. I prefer to discuss my opinions as viewpoints. Regarding the downtrodden, attention must be paid to suitable education and health care. I said suitable, not free, because free has a general meaning. Suitable also includes the term free. For example, in education, we see a bi-polarity. Various nonprofit schools have been established and have absorbed the good teachers in these centers. In any case, with a proper tax system and creating jobs and a work market, this stratum can be supported. As the famous saying goes, you should not give a fish to someone who has no job, but teach him how to fish. In other words, he must have both the ability to work and a place to work. It should not be that we have experts but do not know where to employ them.

[Mohyi] How about reducing unemployment and controlling inflation?

[Ramazanzadeh] The most important basis for controlling inflation is the improvement of the economic situation. Our economy must not be based on a market economy.

[Mohyi] What is your opinion regarding foreign policy and the issue of negotiation with the United States, which is discussed at times?

[Ramazanzadeh] The answer is clear. We never want to sit at the negotiation table with the United States. Whenever this issue is discussed, even in a conversation, we have seen that they have sharpened their blade. In any case, this is an imperialist that cannot tolerate a regime that takes steps to attend to the downtrodden. Also, we cannot ignore the issue of expertise. We can gain access to these sciences in other ways. We do not accept that in order to get the science and specialization, we need the United States. In order to stand on our own feet, we must learn specializations in any form.

[Mohyi] Because of your specialty, what program do you have regarding drugs and treatment?

[Ramazanzadeh] If we are able, with proper planning, to implement the issue of general insurance, which is problematic now, by providing sufficient financial resources, and in connection with the consumption of medicine prevent the false and uncontrolled use of drugs through training that is provided, and ultimately emphasizing policies to strengthen domestic production and self-sufficiency, the problem will be solved.

[Mohyi] Recently, the issue of the change in the election laws and the inclusion of "good reputation" as a qualification of the candidates has been raised. What is your opinion in this regard?

[Ramazanzadeh] I do not know in what sense the issue of "good reputation" is raised, because "good reputation" is what exists in the minds of the people. If this qualification is included, this issue must be analyzed and clarified. Does the Council of Guardians want to decide on the "good reputation" of the candidates through the members of this council? This is not practical. For this reason, in my opinion, it is not a very realistic issue and is mostly an imposition of opinion. For instance, regarding the election law that the directors general in the capital can become candidates while keeping their position, the issue was raised that

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changes in this connection and at the level of deputies and advisors can be made so that a person who wants to be a candidate would resign four months earlier. This condition may not be bad because a candidate needs to establish more contact with the people and a person with high responsibility certainly needs such contact, but on the other levels, it might not be very necessary. In my opinion, instead of the issue of "good reputation," the Council of Guardians had better engage in more careful examination in its evaluations. If more time is needed for its investigations, it should increase the time period. Even basic thinking must go into the issue of campaign advertisement. Posters and the method of publicity are not appropriate. A television channel must be devoted to this matter so that the candidates can express their views better. The speeches of a candidate from an open podium can be an important factor in evaluation.

[Mohyi] Please tell us your evaluation of the Majles elections in the primary phase?

[Ramazanzadeh] The time was too short for proper contact with the people. Nevertheless, the people's participation was very interesting to me. In my evaluation, I perhaps did not think that the people were so responsible, but their extensive presence changed my opinion. I think that the large number of candidates and the fact that they belonged to various groups attracted more people. The large number of candidates, in addition to the differences of ideas, resulted in the elections of 28 Tehran deputies to be extended into the second phase. This shows how carefully people have given their opinions, and it was not that I could say they voted for lists. Also, this indicates that people's political sense is very strong, and because they want essential steps to be taken in solving the problems, they had a better overall participation.

[Mohyi] Did you have any supervision over the ballot boxes?

[Ramazanzadeh] Through the coordination that was done, we could have representatives in the districts, but it should be mentioned that to be able to trust the people's votes to a person who is standing by a ballot box is extremely important. He must consider himself a keeper of trust and not allow himself to interfere in any way. Unfortunately, in the primary phase, this was not quite observed, and we hope that in the second phase, with more supervision by the Council of Guardians, distrust will decrease; otherwise people will lose their trust.

[Mohyi] Which spectra do you consider yourself as representing?

[Ramazanzadeh] The Hezbollah; that is, the people who want to have a servant, a servant who has precision and specialization and feels the needs of the people, while observing all the issues that exist in connection with the preservation of the basis of Islam and the implementation of Islamic laws. I consider myself a deputy of and committed to such people.

[Mohyi] As the last question, do you have a proposal for solving the legal issues of women, or, because you are specialized in medicine, do you prefer to deal with that issue?

[Ramazanzadeh] Certainly, the Majles is a place for expert work while at the same time, a Majles deputy must express opinions in all areas and study them thoroughly. In the present situation, I prefer to work in the field of my specialization and have a viewpoint because in this way work will be done more efficiently. Certainly, if somewhere legal issues are raised, I shall study and get involved to the best of my ability, but I know that within the framework of the family and women, there is much to be done.

[Mohyi] In conclusion, if you have anything in particular to say, please do.

[Ramazanzadeh] I thank all the journalists who, with the same sense of responsibility that the people feel, are active in this juncture, but I ask of people like you that, as publishers of ideas, they help in the proper transmission of ideas, which will result in both the people having more trust in this kind of article and the path to the presentation of views being shortened.

[Mohyi] Thank you for participating in this interview. We will certainly bring your message to the other colleagues.

[Ramazanzadeh] Thank you.

Iran: Faction Infighting for Economic Control

96LA0279K London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The mysterious and newly appeared organization, "[Ansar-e] Hezbollah," whose recent announcements were published in full in several influential media of the Islamic Republic, strongly attacked the economic politics of the government of Hashemi-Rafsanjani, even though he is personally kept out of these attacks for now (see last week's issue of KEYHAN published in London).

Great Resemblance

The economic division of "Hezbollah's Second Statement," in fact, repeats the criticisms that the leaders of

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"Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez" [Militant Clergy Association] uses against the supporters of Hashemi-Rafsanjani in the Fifth Majles elections.

The Militant Clergy Association obeys Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, the leader of the revolution, and its spokesman is 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, the speaker of the Majles, who is preparing himself to occupy the presidential seat.

Considering the great resemblance between the "Hezbollah" statement and the opinions of the Militant Clergy Association, especially in the economic arena, there is no doubt that both organizations, if they are not one and the same, at least get inspiration from a single command.

The second statement of "Hezbollah" in its eighth paragraph, under the heading of "Development on the Basis of Islamic Values," states: "In the issue of economic development, what we should most worry about is blind imitation of developmental models in the capitalist and Western economy and disregard for the characteristics and advantages of our own national culture, a symptom that is governing the process of development in the country." We see that the "Hezbollah" explicitly regards the program of "economic modification" of Rafsanjani, which was implemented during the period of his presidential success, as "copying the Western capitalist models."

The "Hezbollah" adds in its second statement: "Undoubtedly, following the capitalist economic models and the directives of the Western financial and credit establishments will prevent us from true development and construction that is based on the foundations of Islamic thought and culture and the requirement of the capabilities of our own society and will lead us to economic dependence, the rule of the wealth-accumulating rich and the affluent who have no pain over the fate of the people, the expansion of the gap between the poor and the rich, the uncontrolled increase in consumption, and a consumer culture, etc."

Restlessness

'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, who already practically appears in the role of the president of Iran, confessed implicitly on 14 Ordibehesht [3 May] that the "Hezbollah" is the same as the Militant Clergy Association. He said: "In the Fifth Majles elections, the Hezbollah gained an interesting majority in Tehran and, God willing, it will be the same in the provincial cities." We see that the powerful speaker of the Majles uses the term "Hezbollah" in place of "Militant Clergy Association," of which he is a spokesman.

Without mentioning Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Nateq-Nuri strongly criticized his economic policy in the past few years and said: "Preservation of the values of the revolution is not building a few highway bridges and roads and a few developmental plans. In this connection, we do not even reach the dust of some countries including Malaysia."

According to informed sources in Tehran: Some of the influential personalities in the "Militant Clergy Association" are impatiently waiting to push aside and replace the remaining supporters of Hashemi-Rafsanjani from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the Central Bank, and the Plan and Budget Organization. The same sources add that Nateq-Nuri personally does not agree with extensive replacements in the economic organizations of the Islamic Republic and prefers to maintain the government of Rafsanjani, even in the form of a tired and out-of-breath institution, until the presidential elections and the strengthening of his basis of power.

Of course, Nateq-Nuri recently said: "Whichever ideology takes the next Majles will also control the government." Nevertheless, the powerful speaker of the Majles knows well that leaving the crumpled economic affairs of Iran directly in the hands of his supporters is not in his strategic political interest, under the present conditions.

In reaction to the restlessness of the "Hezbollah," Nateq-Nuri's hesitation to grab all the leverages of economic command stems from the following:

1. In the future month when the presidential campaigns escalate, recession and inflation will continue to worsen. Under these conditions, Nateq-Nuri prefers to continue blaming everything on the government as before and to remove himself from executive responsibility.

2. Without imposing direct executive responsibility, the Nateq-Nuri group can continue to be satisfied with general critical positions regarding the problems of the Iranian economy, avoid getting involved in sensitive and specific discussions, and in this way enjoy the oligarchy of "unity of word" governing the power-seeking strategy of the speaker of the Majles.

3. The leadership organization of the "Militant Clergy" has several ardent claimants for running the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the Central Bank, and the Plan and Budget Organization, among whom 'Ali Naqi Khamushi, Morteza Nabavi, and Engineer Danesh Ja'fari can be mentioned. But the "Militant Clergy," contrary to the supporters of Rafsanjani, does not have the necessary cadre for establishing contact and gaining the support of international financial agencies

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(especially the World Bank and the IMF), and the financially influential circles in the Western countries. Last year, Hashemi-Rafsanjani was able, by choosing "presentable" personalities and placing them in sensitive economic positions, to gain the relative confidence of some of the influential economic circles in the West. To advance this strategy, Rafsanjani tried to employ a part of the technocracy prior to the revolution and a few Iranian experts and academics residing abroad.

Nateq-Nuri still does not have such "cards"; but if his lucky star rises in the sky of Iranian politics, naturally, he will make use of the miracle of the "wind."

But considering the direct attacks of the newly-appeared "Hezbollah," it seems that some of the factions opposing Rafsanjani will continue to insist on "sweeping" away the supporters of Rafsanjani, even though there is apparently a long way before harsh criticism concerning his own person occurs.

Iran: Paper Criticizes 'Widening' Income Gap

LD2307150496 Tehran IRNA in English 0850 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 23, IRNA — The English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' in its editorial on Tuesday [23 July] lauded the government for its achievements in different development areas, but at the same time, urged the government to reduce economic pressure on the people by adopting proper economic policies. The editorial praised the government's achievements in the relatively short period following 1979 victory of the Islamic revolution but expressed dissatisfaction over the widening gap between the country's haves and have-nots. Social justice has been overshadowed by the cause of development, said the newspaper, reasoning that the growing trend of development in most cases has entailed raising of the prices of commodities and cost of services by government, while the earnings of government employees have almost remained fixed. The editorial, finally, referred to the government's economic policy on ordering the ministries and other government departments to become self-sufficient and not to depend on the treasury for their needed budgets, believing that the policy is not in the interest of the low-income classes and underprivileged strata.

Iran: Pakistan To Quadruple Oil Imports From Iran

LD2307170496 Tehran IRNA in English 1438 GMT 23 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tehran, 23 Jul — Pakistan will increase its oil imports from Iran to 120,000 barrels per day (bpd) from 30,000 bpd at present, once Iran sets up an oil refinery in Pakistan, Pakistani Ambassador to Tehran Khalid Mahmud said on Tuesday [23 July].

Speaking at a seminar to identify Pakistani market, held at the Export Promotion Centre of Iran (EPCI), he said that the volume of commercial transactions between Iran and Pakistan stood at 185 million dollars annually [as received].

Mahmud said that Iran imported 76 million dollars worth of commodities from Pakistan, including rice, textiles and leather, in return for exporting 106 millon dollars worth of oil and chemical substances to Pakistan last year. [passage omitted]

Iran: General on Successes of Misaq ba Velayat Maneuvers

NC2407153696 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 10 Jul 96 p 10

[Report on interview with Brigadier General Shushtari by unidentified KHORASAN correspondent on the Misaq ba Velayat, Solidarity with the Jurisconsultancy, maneuvers; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Brigadier general Shushtari, the senior general of the provincial [Islamic Revolution Guards] Corps and commander of the provincial base spoke to us on the dimensions envisioned for the maneuvers, their objectives, and their attainment. He said: During these maneuvers, we had some things in mind. First was organization, that is, we wished to accomplish the "one by three" system as soon as possible. This was so that Basij [mobilization] resistance forces which are part of the Corps family would be able to assist and reinforce the Corps if the ground forces are in a crisis situation. The ground forces should have the capability to utilize the Basij forces so that in times of crisis they can triple their combat capability.

He continued: What we had in mind was a practical drill in explaining duties, in the sense that the Basiji resistance forces can be placed at the disposal of the ground forces and these forces can be reorganized in the framework of the combat units. Of course we should mention the excellent speed with which the operations camp was set up.

He said: The camp was officially inaugurated within 10 days of the orders being issued and this speed signifies a great success for us. As soon as the Basiji forces were sent in, the combat units tripled their strength and displayed their organizational readiness and strength.

Another objective of the camp was the speed of action, the secret of which was in the swift transportation of

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units. Praise be to God, this was also coordinated and completed 24 hours ahead of time and this was a source of satisfaction for all. The issue of the deployment of forces is also of great importance. You are now witnessing 4,000 tents in the Neynava fields and this is in itself a major achievement, especially since in only three days we have been able to deploy five divisions and specialized brigades.

The magnitude of the job becomes clear if we take into consideration the vastness of the province, which is a very promising achievement.

Another outcome of the camp was the cohesion of the units with one another and the ground forces, the Qods, and the resistance forces and all their ranks, including 12 forces. Our commanders, who are from the highest level of management, achieved complete coordination in less than 24 hours and staged the best maneuvers by using a large number of divisions and brigades. [passage omitted]

A point that must be mentioned with regard to the military equipment used is that 90 percent of it is from war booty that fell into the able hands of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps during the years of Holy Defense [Iran-Iraq war]. At this military camp we witnessed the repair and testing of equipment and its high level of efficiency.

[KHORASAN] Every country that stages maneuvers also has political objectives along with military ones. Could you please tell us what the objectives of such maneuvers are?

[Shushtari] We are militarists and it is our duty and obligation to carry out maneuvers to the best of our abilities. The mission of the politicians and statesmen is to utilize it optimally. I can only say that we are constantly defending Islamic traditions and are implementing the exhortations of the great commander in chief of the Armed Forces.

By displaying our strength, we can prove that the eight years of war have not tired or atrophied us and have instead tapped our limitless talents. Today, when eight years have passed since the war ended, we have not distanced ourselves from the past, and instead we feel a greater need for vigilance and competence.

We are striving to safeguard our national security. You know that security cannot be ensured merely by firing bullets and that the language of guns is not the only language for safeguarding our boundaries. It is the presence of our people on the scene and such a display of strength that can protect our security more than anything else. It can also have an impact on the enemy's thinking and plans and make him relinquish his intentions for plots.

[KHORASAN] Could you please tell us about the range and extent of the maneuvers' venue?

[Shushtari] In our plans, we have envisioned an area of 500 kilometers and now we have a physical presence in such an area. [passage omitted]

Iran: IRNA—AFP Admits Distorting Islamic Penal Code

LD2407123396 Tehran IRNA in English 1100 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 24, IRNA — The Tehran bureau of the AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE (AFP) admitted that it had distorted a crucial Islamic penal code article sending it to press without corrections, reported the bilingual weekly 'KAYHAN HAVAI' Wednesday [24 July].

Acknowledging that mistake had been made in covering the law, the bureau described the distortion as a "translation error" when the mistake was pointed out to it a few days later.

The AFP in a dispatch on July 9 said Iran's tough new Islamic penal code "sets out the death sentence for defendants found guilty of unspecified offences against the character of the founder of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah (the late imam) Khomeyni ...and his successor Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i."

The agency did not quote any definite source and did not say where it had got the information from.

According to Article 514 of the Islamic penal code, anyone insulting in any way, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran the late imam Khomeyni (peace be upon him) and the revered leader shall be sentenced to a term of six months to two years in prison.

"It was a translation error. there were no political motives behind the errors" the agency's Tehran bureau told KAYHAN HAVAI.

Asked why the agency did not correct the report later, it said, "we accept that we made a mistake but it was too late to correct the article. We had no text of the penal code to refer to and we learned of our mistake days after we had printed the article."

Iran: New Islamic penal law more deterrent than those it replaces

LD2407205996 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1800 GMT 24 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The prosecutor-general, announced that with the implementation of the new Is-

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lamic penal law, the establishing of security and tranquillity in the community will be further strengthened. Mr. Moqtada'i considered the most particularly important aspect of the new law, compared to the earlier one, to be its deterrent factor. He said: According to the new penal law, instances of theft where the application of stipulated Islamic punishment is not warranted, the sentence envisaged is, besides the administration of 74 lashes, imprisonment from six months to 20 years, depending on the circumstances.

Iran: Universities To Be Purged of Dissent

96LA0279A London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 pp 1, 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The spread of discontent in the environment of universities and spread of progressive ideas and revisionism among students have made the ruling regime quite concerned.

Following the statements of several spokesmen of the regime who in the Friday prayer sermons and other occasions had expressed concern about the situation of universities and warned against the infiltration of liberal ideas opposing religious guardianship among students, 'Ali Khamene'i, in a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, also emphasized the necessity of purging the universities.

Khamene'i, who has assumed the leadership of the new operations to suppress the new intellectual movement in Iran, on Saturday [18 July] this week summoned the minister and officials of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education and told them that the Higher Education environments must be purged of irreligious professors and students and those who are not interested in the revolution, and that instead of such individuals, committed professors and students must come to the universities. These statements of the leader of the Islamic Republic were made precisely at a time when university environments are in serious crisis and chaos. Last week, after the Hezbollah prevented a speech by Dr. Sorush at Amir Kabir University, "Polytechnic of Tehran," and numerous communiques and announcements were issued by the Islamic Associations of the Universities and other groups in condemnation of the action by the Hezbollah, the worries of the officials of the regime of the Islamic Republic regarding the universities increased several fold.

In his statements, he criticized professors and students who do not have religious beliefs and said: This class of academics hurts the feelings of the Basijis and committed students. Khamene'i asked the officials of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education to remove those who propagate against the values of the revolution and the Islamic Republic and in their place invite individuals who are loyal to the government and respect revolutionary values to work.

Khamene'i told Hashemi-Golpayegani, the minister of culture and higher education: You and your colleagues have a very important responsibility, and if the situation of universities and educational science does not change and we do not practice the recommendation of the Prophet, we shall be responsible to answer before God on Judgment Day.

Khamene'i added: In these years, there has been progress in higher education, but universities have not yet become Islamic. Khamene'i emphasized that the time has now come to make the university environment Islamic and said: "If the universities do not become Islamic, the nation will remain behind for several years."

He regarded the plan to privatize higher education a mistake and said that under the present conditions, while the foreign enemy is everywhere and Iran has shortcomings in the technical, scientific, and developmental areas, entrusting higher education to the private sector is neither practical nor permissible.

On the other hand, Ayatollah Jannati, a leader of the Hezbollah, has criticized the existing situation in the universities several times in recent months and demanded the dismissal of professors who oppose religious guardianship and the regime of the Islamic Republic. Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani, the president of Imam Sadeq University, who usually avoids such comments, said several days ago in the meeting of university presidents: With the situation that has occurred in our universities, we shall not get anywhere. He added: The university is a place for the exchange of ideas, not a center for attacking Islamic values.

While 'Ali Khamene'i and a group of his friends are worried about the influence of liberal ideas in the universities and about the future of the Islamic Republic, the quarrel between the Islamic Associations and Ansar-e Hezbollah has escalated strongly. The Islamic Associations of Universities have strongly condemned the disturbances of the Ansar-e Hezbollah, particularly the disruption of the speeches of Dr. Sorush and like-minded professors. The Islamic Association of Amir Kabir University in a statement has called the attack by Hezbollah on such speeches heinous and complained to the Ministry of Interior strongly for failing to prevent such actions by the Hezbollah.

The Islamic Association of the College of Law of the University of Tehran has also condemned the attack by Ansar-e Hezbollah on the speech session by Sorush and

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pointed out that with such actions freedom of expression and opinions and gatherings that are emphasized in the Constitution are violated.

The Islamic Association of the Teacher Training University also in a letter to Hashemi-Rafsanjani has called his attention to the pressures that are increasingly placed on universities.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Trade, Cooperation Protocol Signed With India

BK2307045696 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 22 Jul 96

[Report by Gopal Tiwari—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, July 21 — The existing trade and transit hurdles between India and Nepal for long time back are likely to be removed following a three day visit here recently by Indian Secretary of Commerce Tejendra Khanna. The Indian commerce secretary and his Nepalese counterpart Mohan Dev Pant agreed and signed the protocol for expanding economic and trade cooperation between the two countries. If the agreement is implemented at the ministerial level before the expiry of trade treaty, it would be beneficial, specially for Nepal, to reduce trade imbalance. The Nepal-India trade treaty expires on December 5, 1996.

After the protocol is signed, Nepal can reduce the trade imbalance after changes are made in trade arrangements, it is said. It has been also agreed in principle to make some changes in the existing trade matters between Nepal and India for expanding trade between the two countries in the same protocol.

The existing Nepal-India treaty has provisions for preferential entry into India only of Nepalese products with 50 percent domestic labour and material or Indian material contents. But now it has been agreed upon that all exportable industrial Nepalese goods processed and produced in the country, except those included in the negative list, are to be allowed preferential entry into the Indian market on the basis of new certificates of origin issued by His Majesty's Government and without being subject to Indian import duty and any domestic labour and materials content requirement.

Those items which fall in the negative list are alcohol, cigarettes, perfumes, precious stones, softdrinks, synthetic yarn and textiles.

Secretary of Commerce Mohan Dev Pant talking to The Kathmandu Post said that the agreement between the two countries is a great achievement for Nepal and termed the accord as "historic." He said that this will help reduce trade deficit with India which stands at 20 billion.

The Indian government used to levy high countervailing duty on Nepalese industrial products exported to India, but now an agreement has been reached in principle to allow the entry into India of Nepalese cottage and small industry products approved by His Majesty's Government with the same duty waiver facilities as provided for similar Indian industrial products.

Likewise, arrangement has also been made to lift Nepalese containerised imports on transit without being subject to checking at Indian Customs at Calcutta, if they find the "One Time Locks" on the containers arriving there by ship are intact. And Indian border customs at Raxaul will also clear Nepalese imports without checking them if they find the "One Time Locks" intact, according to the agreement reached between at the secretary level talks.

"I don't disagree that this time the agreement between Indian and Nepalese government is a notable achievement to lift some restrictions on Nepalese products while exporting to India in order to balance trade deficit," said Padma Jyoti, president of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI). "Although various matters have been agreed upon, the implementation aspect is essential at the ministerial level. It is done only in principle not in action," he added.

Pradeep Kumar Shrestha, Third vice president of FNCCI reacting to the agreement said "this move is a notable one picturing the trade balance between India and Nepal.

"This will further help to promote export and import business quite fruitfully as well as encourage Indian investment in Nepal," he said. He also urged the Nepalese government to be active to implement the agreement within 2 months. According to the written agreement, as Nepal has been demanding an additional transit route for trade with Bangladesh and through Bangladesh with third countries, Indian government has shown a positive attitude.

Except these some notable things, to increase Indian investment into Nepal, are that separate agreement has been made between the two countries to make simplified provisions for removing the existing ceiling on Indian investment in Nepal in Indian currency for the promotion of joint investment, which would further increase joint venture projects in Nepal.

To develop an "Export Processing Zone" in Nepal, Indian government has agreed to send a study team here, it is said.

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Nepal: Opposition To Block Ratification of Treaty With India

BK2207050196 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 21 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, July 20—Main opposition leader Man Mohan Adhikari said today that his party would not ratify the Mahakali Treaty in the ongoing session of the House.

"We will not let the Mahakali Treaty be ratified in this session of the House," Adhikari today told reporters at the CPN-UML [Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist-Leninist] central party office at Balkhu.

Government tabled the treaty yesterday in the House for ratification, and for the first time, the main opposition CPN-UML has made its stance on the treaty clear. Till today, it was taking an ambiguous position.

Asked what would be the fallout of repeatedly scrapping treaties signed with India, Adhikari replied, "If a treaty is not in our interest, we will not make hasty decisions on it."

It may be recalled that the treaty was initialled in January during the then Indian external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee's Kathmandu visit. The CPN-UML was the key in the all-party consensus that made the initiation of the treaty possible.

"We wanted to further study all the aspects of the treaty," Adhikari said. "But the government is in a hurry to ratify it."

Meanwhile, Adhikari today saw off seven UML youth leaders from his party office. The youth leaders are scheduled to march from the Mechi bridge in the far east to Mahakali in the far west.

Directing the youth leaders to spread the party's views on the treaty, Adhikari said, "The Mahakali is a border river. We hold that our national interests should not be infringed."

"We object to the tradition of kowtowing to India in the name of friendship," he said. "Nor do we support the tendency to aggravate relations between the two countries by taking extreme views on treaties."

Nepal: Talks Spark Controversy Over Border With India

BK2207050596 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 21 Jul 96

[By Binod Bhandari—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] JHAPA, July 20—A recent talk between the border officials of Nepal and India has sparked controversy in Jhapa as it has created a new situation in which India may now push its boundary pillars to the other side of the Mechi river towards Nepal and may claim the Mechi river for its sole use, contrary to the traditional practice of identifying the border on the basis of the river so far.

The most controversial decision of the meeting was the decision to remove the residents residing within the 15.2 kilometre area of Nepal-India border. If this decision is implemented, a large number of people in the Nepalese territory, right from Bhadrapur to Dhulabari lying within the 15 kilometre distance from the Mechi river, will be affected. People have been living in these areas for centuries.

The understanding, reached between the two sides on July 3 (Ashad 19), was signed by Jhapa CDO [expansion unknown] Birendra Kumar Singh on behalf of the Nepalese team. The Indian team was led by Kisanganj district magistrate R B P Yadav. The joint meeting was held in Kisanganj of Bihar (India).

Similarly, the meeting had also decided to erect the damaged boundary pillars on the basis of old map, identify boundary pillars and construct reference pillars and 87 boundary pillars in the 8 kilometre area of Panthapada, Dibal Bank and Mechi river.

Singh, however, has argued that the said 15 km distance has been mentioned only as an average. He preferred not to elaborate further. On the question whether the understanding called for evacuation of people from the area, he is silent.

The border officer of Jhapa Laxmi Jha who also attended the July 3 meeting is now absconding along with the minute book of the decision. CDO Singh told the newsmen that he was facing difficulty about the decision following the disappearance of the border officer along with the minute book of the joint-meeting.

It is obvious that the recently established pillar nos 51/2 and 51/3 are highly debatable because they have been installed inside the Nepalese territory.

The main pillars which stood as the boundary pillars until now have been turned into reference pillars. When people used to go to India after crossing the Mechi river

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via the route of Bhadrapur customs office, they would see the pillars traditionally known as the indicators of the no man's land. But now these pillars have been pushed further into the Nepalese side.

It is said that there were no reference pillars in Nepal-India border area and all pillars stood for boundary pillars in the past. Now some pillars across the river have come right on the river while most of the them have crossed the Mechi river and encroached into Nepal. The boundary pillars, in the process of crossing the river, had once touched even the premises of a high school built during the time of Rana prime minister Padma Shumsher but local people later removed it.

Meanwhile, a meeting of Bhadrapur Municipality recently decided that the decision of the July 3 Nepal-India joint meeting was objectionable.

The Municipality has expressed grave concern over the border encroachment by India including the areas in ward nos 1, 2, and 3 of the Municipality.

Pointing out that the encroachment of the border by India would end the concept that "Mechi and Mahakali are the border rivers"; the Municipality has urged His Majesty's Government and the Home Ministry to pay attention to the sensitive issue such as this which was associated with the sovereignty and nationalism of the country.

Other government agencies, non-government organisations and political parties of Jhapa are, however, silent on the issue.

The border meeting had also decided to ensure continuity to the flow of electricity between the two countries on the basis of the understanding between them, and cooperate in controlling drug trafficking, smuggling and crime in the border areas.

Pakistan

Pakistan: 'Sources' Report Indian, Israeli Military Cooperation

BK2307105596 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 22 Jul 96 pp 5,8

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad — According to reliable sources, talks have begun between India and Israel for broader military cooperation. The chief of Indian Air Force will soon visit Israel. Israel has expressed its willingness to provide defense technology to India.

According to reliable diplomatic sources, a number of countries friendly to Pakistan have evidence, which proves senior Isreali military officers are giving "anti-terrorist" training to the Indian Army in Kashmir. The sources also say that recent diplomatic meetings between India and Israel resulted in India appointing a military attache to Tel Aviv. After the Indian Air Force official's visit to Israel in December last year, the visit of the Indian Air Chief in the next few days will be an important development.

Pakistan: Report Details Accord With China, Central Asia

BK2307141096 Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 21 Jul 96 pp 1,10

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iqbal Mirza Karachi: A protocol has been signed for the implementation of the quadrilateral agreement on transit trade between China, Kazakhistan, Kyrgyztan, and Pakistan. A meeting of the customs and immigration experts was held in Islamabad on July 2-6 aimed at finalizing the customs procedures and passport-visa regime. The talks culminated in signing of a protocol on customs procedure for goods-in-transit and passport-visa regime. The delegates of Pakistan, the Peoples Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhistan and the Kyrgyz Republic on the basis of common historical and cultural ties, and with a view to further developing economic relations on the basis of mutual benefit, on a long term basis and as a follow-up of various documents exchanged regarding the transit trade traffic between the four countries, in particular the quadrilateral agreement signed at Islamabad on March 9, 1995 and minutes of talks of the first working group meeting held at Bishkek on May 22-23, 1996, finalized customs procedure and passport-visa regime. The four countries agreed that at the ports of entry, the importer/custom clearing agent/custom broken/expediter will file customs declaration (CD) on the prescribed forms of the respective countries. They also agreed that at the point of origin of goods-in-transit, the importer/customs clearing agent/custom broken/ expediter will file international road consignment note/passage document (IRCN/PD) recommended for adoption by the working group in Bishkek. The IRCN/PD shall be the instrument for passage of goods-in-transit through the territories on the contracting parties and shall be stamped by custom authorities of the respective countries at points of entry/exist during the course of journey. The contracting parties further agreed that on filing of customs declaration for the goods-in-transit and international road consignment note/passage document, the following procedure shall be followed: The CD and IRCN/PD documents shall be scrutinized to ascertain authenticity and verification of declarations. The goods-in-transit against forged/fake/invalid documents will be

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treated as smuggled goods and dealt with according to the national laws of the respective countries.

Examination of Goods: The Goods-in-Transit shall be processed under visual examination system. The Examining Officer may carry out visual inspection to verify the declared description/quantity.

However, in cases of doubt or where the seals have been found broken/tampered with, he shall examine the goods. In case of loose goods, examination shall be conducted to the extent of 100 percent of goods. The custom authorities, in case of any discrepancy in description/quantity etc. or in case of goods that are prohibited under respective national legislation such as narcotics etc. or in case of goods restricted by Contracting Parties under Article XII of the quadrilateral agreement shall seize the goods; and the case shall be processed further as per the existing relevant national laws.

Loading of Cargo: The importer/custom clearing agent/ custom broker/expediter will request the appropriate Custom Officer to allow loading on transit vehicle(s). Such request will only be entertained on production the International Road Transit Permit. The loading will commence in the presence of custom authorities, representatives of the port authorities and importer/ custom clearing agent/custom broker/expediter. The loaded vehicle(s) will then be properly sealed. The IRCN/PD will also be signed and stamped and one sealed copy and one open copy shall be handed over to the importer/custom clearing agent/custom broker/ expediter freight forwarder/transporter. The open copy is for the purposes of facilitating smooth passage of Goods-in Transit; and the sealed copy is for the endorsement by the custom authorities at points of exit/ entry.

Movement-in-Transit: The Goods-in-Transit shall preferably be transported in covered/containerized-vehicles. In case of the commodities which cannot be containerized or due to non-availability of containerized-vehicles, open vehicles shall be permitted, however, such vehicles shall be covered with Tarpaulin and secured with ropes and properly sealed. Enroute, in case the vehicle(s) meets with an accident or a theft takes place, the importer/custom clearing agent/ custom broker/expediter freight forwarder/transporter/ driver shall immediately report the matter to the nearest Custom and Police Stations. The custom authorities shall investigate the matter and, if satisfied, will reaffix the seal on the container (s) vehicle(s) and will furnish a certificate to that effect.

Verification of Goods-in-transit at the Port of Exit: The Custom stations at points of entry will dispatch a copy of IRCN/PD to the Custom Station at the port of exit, Custom Station at the port of exit will confirm that goods-in-transit are as per IRCN/PD and have crossed the border within the authorized transit time-period.

In case of non-compliance by the Traffic-in-Transit, the custom authorities will notify the concerned authorities, in which case, the case shall be dealt according to the national laws of the Contracting Party concerned. Transfer of goods-in-transit Across Borders: After crossing over from the territory of one Contracting Party to the other Contracting Party, the custom officials of the later country shall carry out scrutiny of documents and examination of, goods-in-transit as described above in points 1 and 2 of this Article.

If satisfied, the competent custom officer shall affix seal on IRCN/PD and allow onward journey of goods-in-transit. In, case of discrepancies, the case shall be dealt according to the relevant national laws. The Contracting Parties agreed that the following transit time will be allowed for movement of goods in-transit from the point of entry to the point of exit:

China: 180 days,

Kazahistan: 7 days,

Kyrgyztan: 30 days,

Pakistan: 30 days.

However, on the request of the delegates from China, Kyrgyztan and Pakistan, the Kazakh delegate agreed to convey, to the competent organs of the Republic Kazakhistan to consider increasing the transit travel time from 7 days to 30 days.

Of the four Contracting Parties, two Contracting Parties namely Kazakhistan and Pakistan agreed that one year multiple entry visas be endorsed on valid passports of the personnel concerned with goods-in-transit.

Concerned personnel include freight forwarders/transporters/drivers and importer if accompanying the goods-in-transit. Such visas may issued for undertaking a maximum of six visits and may be valid for duration of the International Road Transit Permit. The other two Contracting Parties namely China and Kyrgyztan agreed to recommend to the competent authorities of their respective governments to extend the same facility.

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Pakistan: Sudanese Envoy Discusses Ties With Egypt, Press Freedom

BK2307111296 Islamabad THE NATION in English 22 Jul 96 p 2

[Rashid Khadir, Sudanese ambassador to Pakistan, talks to THE NATION's Shahzad Badar, in Islamabad on 21 July]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The army in Sudan does not interfere in politics and the Press is absolutely "free now" after being handed back to private individual control, revealed Rashid Khadir, Ambassador of Sudan, during his visit to THE NATION's office on Sunday [21 July]. Ambassador Khadir during his chat refuted charges leveled against his country regarding harboring and sponsoring of international terrorists.

The Western Press, he said, has always been against Islam which is a fact.

The West, he said, provides support to many authoritarian regimes and criticize democratic ones. Sudan, he said, has earned Western hostility due to its independent policy which does not follow US dictates. Implicating Sudan in international terrorism and accusing it of executing an assassination attempt on the Egyptian President the Ambassador reckoned was one of the "greatest fallacies". Sudan, he said, has condemned terrorism at the UN and in the Security Council.

Categorically denying the presence of any terrorist bases in Sudan, he said, "We have no ideological affinity with the organizations". Mustafa Hamza, he pointed out in one of his interviews with MBC, had stated that he had nothing to do with the Sudanese Government.

Some "Afghan and Arabs" the Ambassador said, had infiltrated into Sudan during the visa relaxation. In 1989, he said the borders were opened to all Arabs and the requirement for visa waived. The decision, he said, later created great difficulties for the government and has now been rescinded.

Commenting on relations with Egypt, the Ambassador said they were strained due to accusations thrown against his government and not due to some serious policy difference. The present state of Egypt-Sudan relations, he said, were due to Egyptians accusing Sudan of sponsoring the attack on President Mubarak in Addis Ababa last year.

Social relations with Egypt, he said were normal and so was trade between the two nations. "Unresolved differences" with Egypt, he said were the only obstacle to good relations. He said Sudan had friendly relations with Saudi Arabia, Syria and other Arab countries. Elaborating on the North South tension in his country Rashid Khadir said the reason behind it was not religious, ethnic or political but of an economic nature. The South, he said was demanding equality and equal distribution of wealth, Economic discrepancy and underdevelopment, Khadir said took roots in the region due to the policies of the British colonial rule which the present government of President 'Umar al-Bashir was rectifying. Sudan has a federal Presidential form of government system comprising 26 States each with its own provincial assembly and government. The state governors are appointed by the President and each State has representatives in the National Assembly. The 16 ministers in the Northern states according to the Ambassador belong to the Southern States. Election in Sudan are not conducted on party basis but on individual level. There are no political party in Sudan. The country's assembly is committed to a Islamic political philosophy churned out by a political state organ vested with task for formulating policies for the people. According to the ambassador the political organ has members from all level of the country's political hierarchy.

The Ambassador while briefing about Press in Sudan claimed that it was "free now" with no censorship though foreign press material has to undergo censorship. There are no party papers in Sudan disclosed the Ambassador .

Press in Sudan has gone through difficult time like in Pakistan. Seventy major newspapers were nationalized in Sudan during President Nemeri, the Ambassador said, "tried to make them independent" but failed to achieve any results. The papers he said, were returned to private owners and companies who owned them by this government. The two English dailies from Khartoum — SUDAN NOW and NEW HORIZON — are privately owned by companies, he added.

The newspapers affairs, Rashid Khadir revealed was looked after by Newspapers Council, an independent body, whose members are appointed by the Parliament. Commenting on the female participation, the Ambassador revealed that women in Sudan were given the right to vote in 1965 and now have the chance to enroll in the army. The Sudanese Ambassador has been in Pakistan for six months. He has been serving the Sudanese Foreign Office since 1970 and has been on diplomatic assignments to Libya, USA, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Chad and Algeria.

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Pakistan: Leghari Sees Indian Hand in Recent Explosions

BK2407125596 Karachi DAWN in English 24 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Staff Correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore, July 23 — President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari on Tuesday [23 July] said technical evidence and secret agencies reports suggested an Indian hand behind the bomb blasts in Pakistan. The president was talking to reporters during a visit to the Services Hospital where he had gone to inquire about the welfare of those injured in the Lahore airport bomb blast on Monday.

"We will look into it," the president said while replying to a question whether Pakistan would lodge a formal protest with New Delhi over the bomb blasts. However, he said, Pakistan wanted to develop good and friendly relations with India.

Mr Leghari was accompanied by interior minister Nasirullah Khan Babar, Punjab governor Raja Saroop Khan, chief minister Sardar Arif Nakai and senior minister Malik Mushtaq Awan.

Extraordinary security measures had been adopted during the president's visit to the hospital, and media men were allowed in after much checking and questioning. The president had arrived in the city earlier in the afternoon.

The president said 12 bomb blasts had occurred in Pakistan during the recent past and agencies had reported that the explosive material used indicated the involvement of a certain country. When asked to name the country, he said the commonality behind the bomb blasts and the explosives used for them suggested an Indian hand. "But we do not want to put the blame for bomb explosions on a neighbouring country."

Mr Leghari said the agencies concerned were gathering technical details about the blast at the Lahore airport. But the evidence collected from the blasts at the Shaukat Khanum Hospital in Lahore, from Sheikhupura and Bhai Pheru and the live bomb recovered from Narowal, Shakargargh, indicated that all such acts of subversion were interconnected.

He said Pakistan had always wanted a peaceful settlement of all differences with India including the Kashmir issue which could not be solved through military means.

While addressing a SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] meeting, the president recalled, he had made it clear that all issues, including Kashmir, could be solved only through peaceful means.

Earlier, Mr Leghari said those who were planting bombs in Pakistan were enemies of all Pakistanis and of humanity for they were attacking the lives and property of innocent people. It was the duty of the government, the opposition, all law-enforcement agencies and the people to join hands in fighting such elements. He said saboteurs could be located and apprehended with improved intelligence and policing. They could also be traced out through technical and circumstantial evidence. It was perhaps not possible to avoid such acts of terrorism, but these could be minimised through the adoption of more effective anti-terrorist techniques.

The president urged the need for creating awareness among the people as to how to keep an eye on terrorists. The people should be taught to keep a vigil on terrorists at public places like mosques, airports, shopping centres, public parks and public transport. They must also be taught to be aware of abandoned luggage at public places. He said this did not mean that the government wanted to scare the people. "It is necessary for everyone to remain alert because anyone can be the victim of a subversive activity."

Mr Leghari said the government too had to improve its law and order machinery. There were many shortcomings and the police would have to be modernised, technically as well as professionally. In many countries, like the US, Britain and Ireland, there had been loss of property and lives, but the countries had minimised the terrorist threat through better anti-terrorist measures.

He expressed his grief over the bomb explosion at the airport during which, he said, four people were killed. It was the duty of the Punjab government to provide relief and succour to the victims and he was happy that the same had been done on the day of the incident. Mr Leghari said experts and law enforcement agencies were working on the explosion at the airport but he had come to Lahore to personally know what they were doing.

Earlier, the president met every injured person in the hospital. He assured them that the terrorists would be unearthed and said the government would provide them with all medical facilities.

Earlier, provincial health minister (urban) Chaudhry Badruddin distributed cheques among the injured.

Pakistan: Sources Cited on Indian Origin of Lahore Airport Bomb

BK2407140396 Islamabad KHABRAIN in Urdu 24 Jul 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Special Correspondent] A preliminary report on Monday's [22 July] bomb explosion at the Lahore airport has been completed. Reliable sources have

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informed KHABRAIN that the plastic bomb used had been hidden in a briefcase which was lying on a chair. Moreover the bomb weighed four and not two kilograms.

The sources added that instead of electronic circuitry, either sulphuric acid or mercury was used as a timer. When the safety pin is removed from the bomb the sulphuric acid or mercury comes into contact with the explosive. This causes a powerful blast, damaging everything within a radius of 30 to 40 feet. According to the sources, not long ago, such a bomb was found in the border areas of Lasser Kalan (Narowal), and was defused by the bomb disposal unit. Sulphuric acid or mercury was used in the timer affixed to that bomb. According to the experts, the timer is also destroyed when the bomb explodes, so it is likely that this also took place at Lahore airport.

According to the sources, these findings show that the bombs used in Punjab have been smuggled in from India. The suspicion that Indian agents are involved is also strengthened by the finding that the Lahore airport bomb was Indian made. According to experts, it is not possible for a layman to make this kind of a bomb. Therefore, it is very clear that it was smuggled in from across the border.

Pakistan: Chief Minister Steps Up Security in Lahore, Other Areas

BK2407160096 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 Jul 96 pp 1,11

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE — Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Arif Nakai has ruled out the possibility of internal elements behind the Lahore Airport blast and assured the newsmen that government will step up security measures at sensitive and public places. He informed the newsmen that a team of American bomb experts headed by Mr. Scott has been invited to investigate the blast incident.

Addressing a hurriedly-called press conference here the Chief Minister said certain subversive elements had been trying to create panic among the people. "But I am convinced that the people would not allow sinister designs of such elements to succeed. I fully believe that no Muslim could dare to undertake such a nasty crime in the holy month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, the CM [Chief Minister] said.

Giving facts of the incident, the Chief Minister said that a two kg foreign-made bomb was concealed in leather briefcase at passenger lounge of the airport. He said the tragic incident left four dead and 68 injured.

Responding to a query Nakai said the place of incident did not come under the jurisdiction of the provincial government. "Only federal government is responsible for ensuring security at the airport", he added. He informed the newsmen that he discussed the incident with the Defense Minister who deputed Secretary Defense to visit the affected area. However, he said his government had tightened the security at all the bus stands and railway stations. Moreover, the government is considering to hire the services of retired army personnel who would be deputed at the bus stands and Railway stations round the clock.

Similarly, special medical units will be set up in the hospitals in four big cities to provide treatment to the victims of such incidents, while burn units will be established at divisional headquarters.

He said though the government has been doing its level best to counter these subversive activities, the cooperation of all the patriotic citizens, and political parties including the Opposition was indispensable to check such elements.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: President—Any Assassination Attempts 'Would Not Succeed'

BK2507060396 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga declared on Wednesday [24 July] that certain ruthless forces aiming to assassinate her would not succeed in their attempts as long as the people were with her.

"It will not be easy. My strength is the will of the people," Kumaratunga asserted.

Speaking at a meeting of Tea Smallholders in Colombo, the President disclosed that her only enemy was not the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] leader V. Prabhakaran.

"He is not the only one. There are five to 10 corrupt businessmen who wish the same. They have caused irreparable damage to the country through their fraudulent deals. Naturally, they are not happy with our attempts to close various loopholes through which they made a bounty and are plotting to kill me," she said.

The president told the gathering that she had received several death threats from this band of rogue businessmen, sometimes with a time frame such as two months or six months.

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"These months turned into years and now I have remained 24 months in office. My mission is to serve the people and uphold their rights and liberties even at the expense of those of mine. No one can stop me from fulfilling this mission," she said.

Sri Lanka: President Makes Statement on Mullaitivu Battle, Train Bombs

BK2507024296 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga Wednesday [24 July] urged the people not to fall prey to the scheming tactics of ruthless Tigers and power-hungry elements of the South who aim to achieve their ulterior motives by inciting violence in the rest of the country.

In a special statement issued by the Presidential Secretariat on the twin incidents at Mullaitivu and Dehiwala, the President requested the people to remain calm and help the government maintain law and order at this juncture without playing into the hands of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] which has a hidden agenda of inflaming another Black July and alienating Sri Lanka in the international community.

The statement said: "Terrorism has shown its horrendous and cruel hand again to the world. This is evident by the loss of precious lives in today's bomb explosion in Dehiwala. It is clear that the terrorists are resorting to this campaign according to a deliberately calculated plan with a hidden agenda. It is obvious that the LTTE, getting alienated from the Tamil masses day by day due to military victories and the government's political initiatives, is desperately seeking the sanctuary of vicious acts such as the Mullaitivu attack and Dehiwala bombing to re-gain their dominance.

"Our gallant security forces who only a few months ago liberated the Tamil masses in the North from the grip of the LTTE, were engaged in an intense battle to defend the Mullaitivu camp. I highly appreciate their bravery and dedication. I salute the valiant members of the security forces who sacrificed their lives for the unity of Sri Lanka. And I firmly believe that the security forces possess the strength, the courage and the leadership to eradicate LTTE terrorism.

"The LTTE aims to kill two birds with one stone through cowardly bomb attacks of this nature. Their aim is to divert the attention of the armed forces in the North by inciting violence in the South.

"Another one of their objectives is to instigate another Black July by provoking the Sinhalese. They hope that the Tamil people will once again return to their fold by following this course of action. They also believe that Sri Lanka's image could be tarnished internationally if violence against Tamils could be fomented.

"It is not only the LTTE which seeks to achieve this cruel, conspiratorial objective. Power-hungry factions in the South are also keen to see such a situation. Therefore, the public must clearly comprehend the intentions of terrorists as well as power-hungry elements. We must not fall prey to the provocative acts of terrorists and conspirators. People of the South will be falling into the LTTE trap if they turn to violence at this moment. It will also cause a setback to the victories achieved by our heroic soldiers in the North. Therefore I earnestly appeal to the people to understand the reality and remain calm and thereby support the government to maintain law and order.

"I extend my deepest sympathies to the relatives of the soldiers who laid down their lives in the Mullaitivu Battle and to relatives of victims of the Dehiwala bomb blast".

Sri Lanka: Thrivida Pahara Troops Close in Mullaitivu Camp

BK2507023896 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Advancing troops of Operation "Thrividha Pahara" were Wednesday [24 July] approaching closer to the Mullaitivu camp after overcoming heavy resistance and mortar attacks by Tigers.

Official reports said the troops had effectively retaliated inflicting heavy casualties among the Tigers, backed by artillery and air cover.

Reports said 60 Tigers were killed and a large number were injured. It said due to fighting on July 23, one officer and 6 soldiers were killed. Also one officer and 48 men were wounded, the report said.

The Sri Lanka Navy continues to ferry additional resources to the beach head established south of Mullaitivu. A landing craft of the Sri Lankan Navy was slightly damaged due to Tiger fire, the report said.

Official sources said that the Sri Lanka Air Force MI-24 helicopter gunships continued to engage LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] concentrations and also provide close air support to the Navy and MI-17 helicopters flying in additional troops.

The Sri Lankan navy in the face of mortar and other stiff resistance continued to operate in the area and assist the army in ferrying troops, official sources said.

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Both Reuter and AFP reported later that troops had stormed into the garrison and taken complete control after seven days of bitter fighting.

While the bitter, bloody fighting in the Mullaitivu area entered its 7th day yesterday, Tigers had forcibly admitted 400 of their cadres injured in the battle to the Kilinochchi hospital.

Our Vavuniya correspondent said the Tigers had first discharged under duress the patients who were already at the hospital undergoing treatment to make way for the injured 400 Tigers. They had then compelled all medical personnel at the hospital, doctors, nurses and other hospital staff to treat the injured Tigers.

Residents told our reporter that the discharged patients and new patients from the area seeking admission to the hospital were undergoing untold suffering and inconvenience due to the callous attitude of the Tigers who had forcibly admitted their injured cadres.

One resident said the Tigers who were always accusing others of their racist policies were acting in the same communal manner, when admitting people to hospitals.

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Sri Lanka: President—Cuts in Subsidies 'Inevitable' Due to War Effort

BK2507055996 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Report by Pramod de Silva—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cuts in subsidies will be inevitable if the war effort is to be continued at the present pace with the objective of ending the North-East strife within the next year, President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said Wednesday [24 July].

"We have come to a crucial stage where we have to decide between the future of the country and subsidies and handouts. We will have to forego certain subsidies for the sake of the country," President Kumaratunga told a gathering of tea smallholders in Colombo.

"We do not have to lie. We cannot have free goodies and win the war at the same time. We will have to cut some subsidies that we ourselves introduced. However, such cuts will be kept to a minimum," she added.

She urged the people to realise that the country could no longer afford to spend huge amounts of funds for pay hikes and subsidies while soldiers sacrificed their lives in the battlefront.

She outlined some of the subsidies and their cost to the national exchequer: flour subsidy — Rs. [rupees] 7,000 million, fertiliser — Rs.1,500, Samurdhi—Rs.8,000 million and Paddy marketing Board — Rs.1,000 million.

"Which other country in the world would continue with subsidies of this scale if it had to wage a devastating war at the same time?," she asked.

The LTTE, she said, "does not want peace". Therefore, the war will have to be continued.

"We have the determination and the capacity to fight the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. This calls for a huge expenditure of around Rs.40,000 million. But if it is not done, the country will be bogged down in an economic quagmire. This is why it is imperative to end the war without delay".

She pointed out that the government has already presented a viable political initiative aimed at solving the ethnic problem, which guarantees and safeguards the rights of both the majority and minorities.

"The war has dragged on for 13 years and as much as 15% of the national revenue and 25% of the budget allocations are channelled to the war effort. The war cannot be won otherwise. We have eliminated corruption in arms purchases, unlike in the past when

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defunct or malfunctioning equipment was bought in order to benefit a few".

She noted that some public servants agitated for pay hikes and more perks while brave sons of the soil lay down their lives in the battlefield. This "let's party" attitude should be banished from society.

The president warned that lethargic public servants who continue their old ways without being perceptive to the need of the hour and changes in society will face tough penalties including dismissal.

Sri Lanka: BOI Approves 'All-Time Record' of Foreign Investment

BK2507060196 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Tuesday [23 July] (Lankapuvath) — The Board of Investment (BOI) has approved an all-time record of nearly 90 billion rupees (US $2 billion) in foreign direct investment projects in Sri Lanka since the January 31 bomb blast in Colombo.

Deputy Director-General (Promotions) BOI, Manilal De Mel told Lankapuvath that as many as 24 projects totalling US $1.8 billion have been approved from February 1 this year, to date.

These included three projects by Fortune 500 companies, namely P and O (Australia/UK/Sri Lanka) which was investing US $650 million for the development of the Port of Colombo where work is in progress, Shell (UK/Netherlands) with an investment of US $50 million for gas distribution, Unilever (UK) for a US $12.7 million ice-cream project for which the agreement has been signed.

The other projects include the US $400 million Galle Port development project by Mott MacDonalds Ham Interbetten (UK/China) where work is in progress, Telia Lanka Private Limited and Lanka Bell (Sweden/Sri Lanka/USA/Singapore/Canada) for two US $300 million wireless loop telecommunication projects which have been approved and the agreement to be signed shortly, Broadlands with a US $74.6 million investment in a 40 Mega Watt hydro-power project for which the application has been received and approved in principle, Klockner Humboldt Duetz (W. Germany/UK) for a US $60 million project for the setting of a 51 mw diesel power plant at Sapugaskanda which is under construction, Malaysia's Integrated Telephone System for a US $36.4 million Public Pay Phone project which will commence shortly. Hilton Resorts (USA) for a US $32.7 million Resort and BPA [expansion unknown] Hotel project which will commence construction shortly.

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